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Tuesday, 12 October 2004, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/59/430)

The President (*spoke in French*): Before proceeding to the items for this meeting, I should like to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/59/430. It contains the text of a letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly informing the Assembly that 13 Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations under the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I should like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in document A/59/430?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 11 and 53 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/59/2)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): We welcome the opportunity to participate in the joint debate relating to the report of the Security Council (A/59/2) and to the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

At the outset, we would like to express our thanks to the Security Council and to the Secretariat for their commendable efforts in preparing this year's report, which, as in previous years, conveys the intensity and variety of the issues considered and of the decisions taken. Over the years, the Council has been increasing the transparency of its work, and it needs to be encouraged to do more in that regard. However, the wider membership still finds the consultation process to be quite sketchy.

The gravity of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council seems only to increase with each passing day. The pace at which significant developments occur around the globe today is often unnerving, particularly when compared with the snail's pace of the evolution of international governance mechanisms. Of course, conflicts between States

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remain a prime danger, given the potential numbers of people and resources that could be involved and the fallout of such conflicts on other States.

Equally if not more important today is the threat of terrorism, which, without established bases or locations and without uniformed soldiers or weapons of mass destruction, is difficult to address effectively while maintaining basic democratic rights and protection for the general population.

For many reasons, there has been a tendency of late to identify peoples along tribal, ethnic, racial or religious lines. Add to that the competition for natural resources, such as land, minerals and water, and the potential for conflict rises dramatically. That has been the story in Africa — as well as in other areas of the world — for much of the past few decades, and it has led to the increasing need for peacekeeping forces, in terms of both manpower and other resources, from outside the areas of conflict. The pressures imposed by the international flow of small arms and anti-personnel landmines — which has placed such weapons in the hands of often ruthless groups, thugs and even leaders — have complicated the issue even further.

Against that background, the Secretary-General rightly noted in an interview last year that there has been a tendency to focus on hard threats and to neglect soft threats — such as poverty, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, environmental degradation, inequality and the desperation in which some people live — which can be equally destructive.

If the world is to act collectively against those dangers, perhaps the only existing mechanism available to nations and able to confer legitimacy is the United Nations. Where action must be taken in a conflict situation, that usually means action through the Security Council. But as currently constituted, the Council is not a representative body; rather, it continues to be a legacy of the Second World War. Since its inception, there has been little or no change in its structure or power base, particularly on such issues as permanent membership or veto power.

Obviously, there is an urgent need for an inclusive Council that takes seriously into consideration the interests of both developed and developing States and of the world's power and population centres. The Council's powers, membership and composition must better reflect the demographic, economic and political realities of today's world if the Council is to slow the erosion of legitimacy it is suffering from because of its exclusion of vast numbers of peoples, States and economic classes.

Given the mounting pressure on the international system, from so many directions and against the background of events of the past few years, reform of the Council and perhaps of the United Nations system itself are undoubtedly part of a larger issue that calls for a rethinking of the international institutions. In the words of the Secretary-General, "Many of us sense that we are living through a crisis of the international system" (*Press release SG/SM/8803, 30 July 2003*). With particular reference to the crisis in Iraq, he said also that that war and ongoing crises in Africa

> "force us to ask ourselves whether the institutions and methods we are accustomed to are really adequate to deal with all the stresses of the last couple of years".

Certainly, few would question the need for reform of the multilateral system. And many would stress the dire necessity of reform of the Security Council, whether of its composition, or its capacity to anticipate as well as to respond to crisis, or its ability to follow through with respect to the maintenance of peace.

Security Council reform is currently stalemated, and as the President of the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session stated at the 94th meeting of that session, the stalemate is likely to be broken only if there is a major political breakthrough in the capitals of some key Member States. However, he also conceded that the Working Group on Security Council reform had succeeded in taking a few small steps. Responses to the questionnaire he distributed last year to members confirmed almost universal frustration over the inability of the Working Group to produce the desired outcomes. We are, therefore, pleased at the Secretary-General's establishment of the High-level Panel to assess the role of the United Nations in dealing with new global threats, challenges and change. Some of its initial soundings are encouraging. We look forward to its report to the Secretary-General in December, and to his own observations by the next session of the General Assembly.

Our goal remains that of a safe world where conflict is thwarted through mechanisms of preventive diplomacy. Many regions in the world, beset by conflict, suffer from neglect and inattention; some of the wars last longer, thus creating a generation of

armed, uneducated and hopeless youth. The result has been the failure of States, a cycle of poverty, instability, social disintegration and the collapse of governance. Such dysfunctional States also pose other threats as potential breeding grounds for terrorism and other kinds of crime. Obviously, the Council needs to have greater sensitivity towards poor countries embroiled in brutal conflicts, which require urgent attention concerning peacemaking and peacekeeping. Closely related to this is post-conflict peace-building, which in the view of some experts remains fragile and has yielded mixed results. That should not be the case, given that peace-building, in the view of professional analysts, is an international necessity and responsibility and represents a collective commitment by the United Nations and other international actors to deal with the sources of violent conflict in conflict-torn societies while preparing the ground for sustained peace and development.

Unfortunately, according to relevant studies, the results of the last 10 years of peace-building practices and policies are, at best, ad hoc, tentative and uneven. That is not encouraging and represents a real challenge to the efforts towards the reform of the Council, especially in the post-9/11 environment. Much is expected in that regard from the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, in terms of underscoring the need for the United Nations to renew its commitment to conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building.

Finally, my country is very pleased with the evolution of transitional governance in Somalia. The election of a President two days ago represents the clearest manifestation yet of the Somali people's desire to restore peace and stability to their shattered homeland. The Republic of Djibouti extends its unflinching pledge to the new Government of Somalia that it will spare no efforts to help its brothers and sisters in their earnest quest for nation-building.

Equally, I am confident that the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, will direct full and undivided attention to Somalia as it once again takes its place among the nations of the world.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic): It has been 11 years since the Working Group on Security Council Reform was created. That is a very long time — too long, I would say. Many of us are becoming a little frustrated, impatient and weary. However, in the light of existing and recently emerging threats to international peace and security, the significant role of the Security Council and the need to reform it in order to reflect today's global realities have never been more relevant. Hence, we must do everything we can to find an acceptable solution to the crucial question of reform.

The primary aim of this exercise is to make the Security Council more effective by making it more representative, transparent and democratic. In that endeavour, most Member States have focused on the issues of expansion of the membership of the Council and improving its working methods and decision-making process.

Along with the majority of other United Nations Member States, the Lao People's Democratic Republic is in favour of an increase in the number of both permanent and non-permanent members, with the new members coming from the developed and developing countries in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution and taking into account the relative importance of the various countries. In that context, the Lao People's Democratic Republic reaffirms its support for Japan, Germany and India becoming permanent members of a newly expanded Security Council.

Furthermore, we would like to stress that reform should also include measures that would render the Security Council more transparent in its working methods and, especially, in its decision-making process. We believe this transparency would not only boost the confidence of Member States but would also allow all of us to better understand the merits of the Council's decisions and to fully support them.

In this exercise, another important issue to be addressed is the veto power. Throughout the years, the world has witnessed an increasing abuse of the veto. The veto power is obviously antidemocratic and discriminatory. However, taking into account the sensitivity and complex nature of the issue, we hope that Member States will work out a solution acceptable to all.

Today's world is undergoing complex and rapidly changing evolution. Since 1945, great changes have occurred. The Security Council, the main body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, should adapt to these new changes and realities.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic believes that, with our tireless efforts and in a spirit of compromise, we should work together to reform the Security Council in order to make this body more effective and legitimate.

Mr Rastam (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to participate in this debate on agenda items 11 and 53.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the President of the Security Council for the month of October, Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for his presentation yesterday of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. My delegation has taken note of the Council's report, as contained in document A/59/2.

Consideration of the annual report of the Security Council by the General Assembly provides a good opportunity for the larger membership of the Organization to assess the work and performance of the Council during the period under review. This would be in keeping with Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Malaysia appreciates the serious efforts initiated by Mr. Julian Hunte, President of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, to institute greater and regular interaction between the General Assembly and the Council. We especially welcomed the adoption of Assembly resolution 58/126 of 13 January 2004. Part A of the annex to that resolution contains, inter alia, references to the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council in the context of revitalizing the work of the Assembly. It should also be seen in the context of promoting transparency in the work of the Council.

My delegation recalls that an open meeting of the Council for the purpose of discussing its report before submission to the Assembly was convened prior to the Assembly's fifty-seventh session. That promoted greater transparency and accountability in the work of the Council. We regret that the Council has done away with this practice. We also regret the late issuance of document A/59/2.

The report of the Security Council has shown a significant improvement in the Council's method of work. However, it continues to lack a substantive and analytical account of the work of the Council. The incorporation of more details and analyses beyond a factual account of the Council's work would certainly help the wider membership of the United Nations to appreciate the circumstances that had influenced the decisions of the Council on a particular issue. That would enable a greater appreciation of the achievements made or difficulties faced by the Council on all questions under its consideration, and it could allow non-Council members to offer suggestions to the Council on possible measures to further improve the work of the Council.

My delegation notes that the Council addressed a wide range of issues during the period under review. A total of 213 meetings were held and 60 resolutions adopted. Conflicts and instability in Africa continue to dominate the work of the Council. Malaysia is pleased that the situation in Liberia has considerably improved, and Guinea-Bissau has successfully completed the first phase of its transitional political process. The Security Council mission that visited some countries in the African continent in June this year made some important recommendations towards establishing political stability in the subregions, and those recommendations should be supported. Malaysia looks forward to the Council taking more effective decisions on conflict situations, particularly in Africa.

We agree that the holding of thematic discussions is useful to improve the effectiveness of the Council. We note that 12 meetings for thematic discussions, as well as 13 open debates and briefings, were convened. Malaysia considers thematic discussions and open debates as avenues for allowing Council members and the wider membership of the United Nations to offer views and suggestions on issues directly related to the work of the Council. However, it is not clear whether these have actually been fully considered by the Council when arriving at decisions.

Given the increasing workload of the Council, we believe that thematic discussions should be kept to the minimum and held specifically with a view to achieving concrete results that would have an impact on the performance, not only of the Council, but also of the United Nations at large. We continue to believe that thematic discussions and other important issues addressed by the Council from time to time would merit the submission of special reports to the General Assembly, as provided for under Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter and in keeping with the intent of Assembly resolution 58/126.

My delegation fully appreciates the practice increasingly adopted in the Security Council to urge speakers to be brief in their statements. We understand the need to respect precious time. However, we feel that this should be done in a manner that also respects the principles embodied in the Charter, as well as the Council's own provisional rules of procedure. At the same time, I would urge the Council to respect the wishes of Member States to express their views publicly in the Council, particularly on issues of wider concern to all, such as on international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

In this connection, any decision by the Council to restrict participation in its open meetings, such as in the case of 8 October 2004, will not be helpful in maintaining the spirit of cooperation between the Council and the larger body of United Nations membership. On these very important questions related to international peace and security, everyone is a stakeholder. This is especially so in the case of the Council's work concerning the fight against international terrorism.

My delegation notes that the Council has increased the invocation of Chapter VII of the Charter. Since 1 August 2003, 28 of its resolutions contain this provision. We strongly believe that Chapter VII must be invoked responsibly after careful consideration of a given question. The Council must not apply double standards. For instance, why has the Council not invoked Chapter VII concerning the question of Palestine, despite the apparent threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, or acts of aggression committed by Israel? Chapter VII should not be invoked to advance narrow political objectives or to satisfy certain national interests. It is the collective interest of the wider membership in the maintenance of international peace and security that should be a major consideration.

Malaysia is concerned with recent trends in the Security Council to prescribe legislation to Member States through its resolutions that also invoke Chapter VII. Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1566 (2004) are cases in point. Malaysia registered the concerns of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) concerning resolution 1540 (2004) in the Council's 4950th meeting, a public meeting held on 22 April 2004. We have insisted that the substance of resolutions such as those mentioned should serve as a basis for consideration by Member States when formulating, in due course, a comprehensive multilaterally negotiated legal instrument to address the specific question at hand. Malaysia would urge the Council to be more circumspect in its attitude towards prescribing legislative measures and invoking Chapter VII on behalf of the Member States of the United Nations.

Malaysia applauds the Council's continued interest on the Palestinian question demonstrated in its monthly briefings and open debates. A total of 20 meetings and 33 informal consultations were convened on that question. That notwithstanding, only one resolution was adopted by the Council, namely, resolution 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004, pertaining to the demolition by Israel of Palestinian homes in the Rafah refugee camp.

The Security Council must improve and maintain its credibility by enforcing its authority on the Palestinian question, in particular in respect of the commitment to the road map and to the two-State solution, the end of occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories, the termination of Israel's settler colonialism activities and the reversal of the construction of the separation wall. The Council must not allow its resolutions to be manipulated or allow itself to be prevented from doing anything meaningful. The Council must take resolute action concerning the construction of the Israeli expansionist separation wall, which was declared illegal in an advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice. Malaysia hopes that that will be done soon on the basis of the initiative presently before the Council.

The question of Iraq naturally has continued to dominate the attention of the Security Council. Iraq is still in turmoil despite all efforts to improve the situation on the ground. Although Council resolution 1546 (2004) of 8 June 2004 returned sovereignty to the people of Iraq, peace, security and stability remain major concerns. Malaysia reiterates its call for the United Nations to play a leading role, particularly in establishing appropriate conditions in preparation for the elections scheduled for January 2005. The orderly conduct of elections is critical to the process of re-establishing a truly independent and sovereign Government in Iraq. Malaysia reaffirms its conviction that the United Nations has the best credentials and can provide the best platform to enable Member States to participate in post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction efforts in Iraq. We look to the Security

Council to find creative ways of achieving those objectives.

The cooperation provided by Member States in the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee is an excellent illustration of effective multilateralism. Member States have displayed their full commitment in implementing and responding to Council resolution 1373 (2001). Certainly this can also be anticipated with respect to resolution 1566 (2004). Malaysia is convinced that the political will displayed by Member States in combating international terrorism will be fortified and gain greater momentum.

Sadly, such cooperation is not replicated in the implementation of many other Council resolutions. As Security Council resolutions are legally binding, it is incumbent upon Member States to implement them without selectivity. The Council must play its role without discrimination to ensure that all Member States adhere to and implement its resolutions.

We wish to reaffirm our support for the adoption by the Security Council of clear and precise indicators to measure its work. One such indicator is the level of compliance by Member States in implementing Council resolutions. That would help to underscore legitimacy in the work of the United Nations and allow the United Nations to regain credibility in the eyes of the international community.

On the issue of sanctions, Malaysia in principle continues to oppose their imposition owing to the debilitating impact of sanctions on the general population. Sanctions should be utilized as a measure of last resort and after careful consideration of their ramifications. The sanctions should hit their intended target and not the innocent populace. Sanctions must be devised with clear parameters, including specific and clearly identified targets, time frames and regular impact assessments. Malaysia hopes that the Council's Working Group on General Issues on Sanctions could expedite its efforts to reach a decision on the recommended duration and termination of sanctions. In that connection, Malaysia welcomes the lifting of the Council-imposed sanctions against Iraq and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya during the period under review.

Turning to agenda item 53, my delegation wishes to state that we agree with the prevailing view that the United Nations, including the Security Council, needs to be reformed in such a way as to enhance both its effectiveness and its credibility. It is essential that the countries that play a major role in the maintenance of international peace and security participate actively in the decision-making process of the Security Council. As the number of Member States, and with it the proportion of developing countries, has increased dramatically, the representation of the Security Council needs to be enhanced. For that purpose, the Council must be expanded in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. During the general debate of the fifty-ninth session, 149 countries referred to the need for Security Council reform. Out of those, 86 countries supported expansion in both categories of membership.

I should like to recall the address delivered by the Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia, at the general debate of the fifty-ninth session on 27 September 2004. He said that the Security Council should be rendered more democratic and representative of the number and geographical spread of its international membership. He also said that the exercise of the veto by the permanent members of the Security Council should be regulated so as to prohibit that power being used unjustly, at the sole discretion of its holder, to overrule the wishes of the majority. He believed that that injustice could be rectified, for instance by making certain types of General Assembly resolutions capable of setting aside a Security Council veto.

We look forward to receiving the report to be submitted early next year by the Secretary-General pursuant to the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, including, we anticipate, recommendations concerning Security Council reform. Meanwhile, Malaysia looks to your leadership, Mr. President, to give impetus to the much-needed forward movement of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform. Indeed, international peace and security cannot be fully maintained without significant reform of the Council, in terms of its membership, methods of work, transparency, democratization and the veto. We look forward to working closely with you, other Member States of the United Nations and the Secretary-General to explore new ideas and produce a fresh outlook towards reforming the Security Council. We already possess the necessary tools to advance the reform process. We believe that what is required now is the full support and political will of Member States.

Mr. de Santa Clara Gomes (Portugal): For many years, there has been widespread agreement on the

need to adapt the United Nations and its main bodies to an international context that has evolved significantly since the end of the Second World War. Today more than ever, the international situation needs a working and effective international system, and the need to reform the United Nations has become more pressing. The Secretary-General, by establishing the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, has given new momentum to our efforts. We look forward to the Panel's recommendations.

The world needs a Security Council that is representative, effective and transparent. The international community, on whose behalf the Council acts, must feel it is a part of the Council's deliberations. In this respect, we welcome some recent improvements in the working methods of the Council. I would highlight the following points.

First, there are increased debates on cooperation with regional organizations. However, this dialogue needs to be further structured and institutionalized, as regional organizations, such as the European Union or the African Union, play an increasing role in crisis management, adding important political, cultural, human and financial value to United Nations missions.

Secondly, the quantity and quality of the troop-contributing countries' meetings with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has improved, thus making troop contributors privy to the workings of peacekeeping operations. There are also mechanisms in place for consultations between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council. However, these mechanisms should be genuinely implemented and become more substantive. Troop-contributing countries and other significant actors should be enabled to express their views and thereby contribute to the creation and mandate of peacekeeping operations at an early stage.

Thirdly, I would like to mention the so-called groups of friends, in which member States of the Council, together with other interested States, organize themselves around a certain issue. This informal format allows for frank and open exchanges. So far this practice is limited, but it should continue and expand. Although decision-making will remain in the hands of the Council, these groups can serve as useful contact points between the Council and the membership.

The reform of the United Nations must not be restricted to the working methods of the Security Council. Its membership must also reflect today's international realities, which differ significantly from the context in which the United Nations was created almost 60 years ago. Portugal has already expressed its support for the presence of Brazil, Germany and Japan on the Security Council. We believe that Africa must be permanently represented at the Council and have expressed support for a permanent seat in the Security Council for India.

It goes without saying that an enlargement of the permanent membership of the Security Council should be accompanied by a revision of the voting procedures concerning the veto, set out in Article 27 of the Charter. To maintain that power as it is would be detrimental to the effectiveness and the perceived legitimacy that we seek to increase through a wider representation.

United Nations reform must include more effective mechanisms and practices in conflict prevention, which is also a major responsibility of the Security Council. In this respect, allow me to recall that Portugal has proposed the establishment of a peace and development commission aimed at addressing conflict prevention in a more effective and comprehensive way, particularly with regard to countries emerging from conflict and with weak institutions.

The proposal stems from the undisputed fact that, since the sources of conflict are varied in nature, only by addressing both security challenges and development needs can countries embark on a sustainable path for peace and prosperity. In the long run, apart from it being ethically correct, a policy of prevention is always the less costly option for the international community.

The new commission we propose would seek combined action on the security, political, economic and nation-building fields, promoting a coherent and cohesive sustained effort by the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, in conjunction with the Bretton Woods institutions and other major interested parties. Bearing in mind that the Charter defines the prevention of armed conflicts as one of the main goals of the United Nations, we sincerely believe that this proposal would significantly contribute to reinforcing the central and crucial role that the United Nations must continue to play in international affairs.

Mr. del Rosario Ceballos (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to say that we are very grateful to the Security Council and the Secretariat for having published this report.

The United Nations is the outcome of an historic convergence of wills forged in the struggle against fascism. The United Nations, as a result of the part it played in maintaining world peace and equilibrium and in light of recent history, remains the ideal instrument for the international community to prevent conflict or restore the peace.

In his statement at the 17th meeting during the general debate at this fifty-ninth session, the Secretary of State for Foreign Relations of the Dominican Republic said:

> "Multilateralism is one of the main pillars of the foreign policy of the Dominican Republic .... For that reason, we join those nations that call for a thorough reform of the United Nations system, with a view to enhancing its democratization and making it a more effective instrument for States Members."

One of the two main bodies of the United Nations is the Security Council. As Article 24 of the Charter says, this small body acts on behalf of the entire membership, but geographical representation within it is unequal. In recent years, a great deal has been said about the need to introduce reforms in order to make the Organization more effective. This aspiration should not become a dead letter, because the responsibilities of the United Nations are growing considerably at a time when unprecedented events and situations of our generation require a high degree of creativity.

To face this challenge, we need far more open participative mechanisms. That is why we — along with many Member States — are very interested in having the Security Council expanded, in recognition of realities that did not exist when the Organization was founded. Asia, Africa and Latin America should quite appropriately have two permanent members, and, at the same time, we should increase the number of non-permanent members. Not only would this contribute to making the most active body of the Organization more democratic, it would also include wider segments of humanity in the making of decisions that, when all is said and done, affect all of us.

Mr. Elisaia (Samoa): Allow me, first of all, to register my delegation's appreciation to the President of the Security Council and to the Secretariat for the work that has gone into the preparation of this year's report (A/59/2). Samoa is grateful for the Council's report, which provides a comprehensive summary of its activities for the period ending 31 July 2004.

While some previous speakers have lamented the absence of an analytic assessment in the report of the Council's achievements, including setbacks, challenges and threats confronting it, my delegation believes that the real and significant value of the report is the opportunity it affords the United Nations membership to gain insight into the work and deliberations of the Security Council.

The workload of the Security Council is steadily increasing. That, we feel, can be attributed in part to the trend in the Council to deal with thematic topics that more appropriately fall under the purview of the General Assembly. There is therefore a pressing need to demarcate the division of responsibilities among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the other organs of the United Nations such as the Economic and Social Council in order to eliminate conflicting mandates, duplication of efforts and waste of limited resources.

On the issue of the transparency of the work of the Council, we welcome the fact that more open meetings and briefings were held over the last year. While we commend them as useful means of engaging the international community on issues that directly affect it, those consultations are not institutionalized and, at best, are held selectively and at random. We therefore urge a more structured approach to allow Member States to contribute in an effective and meaningful manner to the decision-making process, both to encourage wider ownership of decisions taken and to facilitate their timely implementation.

The Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the Charter has not eroded with the passing of time. On the contrary, it remains as valid, relevant and important as ever. It is therefore in the collective interest of the United Nations membership that the Security Council should be effective, decisive, representative and respected.

Samoa continues to actively support the enlargement of the Security Council in both its

permanent and non-permanent membership. We believe that the expansion of the Council is both necessary and desirable to mirror present-day realities and to enhance the Council's effectiveness and legitimacy.

Like other Member States, Samoa supports a credible and efficient Security Council as the central point of reference in a multilateral peace and security system. In that regard, we continue to support the increase in the number of permanent Council members to include Japan and Germany because of their invaluable contribution to the international community. Samoa first took that stance eight years ago at the Assembly's fifty-first session, and recently during last month's general debate.

The almost fourfold increase in United Nations membership over its 59-year history, comprising in the main developing and small island States, makes it imperative that the expansion of the permanent membership of the Council should encompass representatives from the regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

It will always be difficult to carry out any reform of the Security Council given the sensitivity of the issues and the competing and sometimes irreconcilable interests at stake. That is why my delegation earnestly awaits the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and its recommendations to breathe new life into Security Council reform. We will be actively engaged in the consideration of the Panel's report and any other ongoing initiatives in the collective search for reforming the Security Council so that it responds effectively to today's global challenges, threats and current realities.

Mr. Tekle (Eritrea): The Eritrea delegation takes this opportunity to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry, who in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of October presented the annual report of the Council for the period of 1 August 2003 to 31 July 2004 (A/59/2).

My delegation also extends its appreciation to the previous President of the General Assembly, Mr. Julian Hunte, and his colleagues, Ambassador Luis Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador and Ambassador Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein, who during the past year steered with dedication the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council.

On the other hand it is dismaying that while the Working Group has been seized of the matter and has carried out serious consultations since its creation in 1993, no meaningful agreement has been reached to narrow the gaps between the varying positions of Member States, particularly with regard to cluster I issues, on the increase in the membership of the Council. It is hoped that the recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, to be issued on 1 December 2004, will add fresh impetus to the efforts being made to create a plausible consensus.

Throughout recorded history, humanity has been preoccupied with the search for newer and newer formulas to avert wars, resolve conflicts and maintain peace and security. The normative changes that take place in any historical era inevitably trigger new epochal values and structures which, in turn, spawn new concepts, norms, principles and laws — or modify old ones — in order to meet the revolutionary changes of the times.

Humanity has now entered such an era. The end of the cold war and the advent of globalization have ushered in such epochal changes, with their attendant consequences. There is as yet no consensus on whether globalization offers hope and opportunities or has become the major source of disasters, discontent and despair. Yet, there is agreement that the challenges of globalization have become so enormous in both their present impact and potential consequences, that they require us to redefine our concepts, norms, principles and laws. There is also agreement on giving multilateralism even more prominence in international relations. All seem to agree that the United Nations and its mechanisms remain the best institutions for meeting the challenges of globalization and that they therefore must be reformed and revitalized in order to make their principles relevant and structures more competent.

In the age of globalization, discourse on security can no longer be dominated by traditional State-centric paradigms. While it is true that the defence of a State's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity remains paramount, the overwhelming number of people of our world, the threat of hunger, disease and environmental disasters, as well as internal conflicts and massive

displacements, have become equally prominent concerns. Indeed, it is not difficult to conceive of situations in which the security of the citizens of a State that faces no threat to its sovereignty and territorial integrity may actually be gravely threatened by their living conditions. Security must be viewed as going beyond military threats and State-centred analysis and must include socio-economic, environmental and political dimensions, as well as the linkages among them. The security of human beings must be the critical core of concern.

The achievement of a certain commonality of interests among the permanent members of the Security Council following the end of the cold war enabled the Council to make some progress in several areas, including the use of force in the prevention of conflict; the control of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction; the strengthening of the relationships among institutions of the United Nations, as well as relations between the United Nations and regional organizations; and the enhancement of the role of the Secretary-General.

Yet it is also evident that the United Nations was not prepared to cope with the new threats to international peace and security that were given life and quickly matured during the great transition to what has been dubbed the new world order. It was clear that neither the Charter nor the structures of the United Nations system were designed to meet such epochal changes. Thus, while the Organization could contribute to the conclusion of the 10-year war between Iran and Iraq and to the smooth transition to Namibian independence and could play significant roles in conflict resolution in Central America, Afghanistan and Cambodia, it is having difficulties in meeting the challenges of terrorism, transnational crime, including the trafficking of human beings and of illicit drugs, and intra-State conflicts, which are often exacerbated by foreign intervention and massive internal displacement. Afghanistan, Somalia, Haiti and the former Yugoslavia are but a few examples.

Indeed, when the United Nations found it expedient to involve itself in such conflicts — often in cooperation with regional organizations — new questions arose related to the criteria for intervention and the reluctance of major Powers, particularly permanent members of the Council, to subordinate their interests and the interests of their allies — or their debtors — to the wider interests of peace and security.

The need to strengthen the Security Council and to make it a body that is more representative, united and proactive but that still reflects the configuration of global power has become self-evident. It is also believed that, if the reform and strengthening of the Security Council is to be meaningful, there must be equally credible reform and revitalization of other United Nations institutions, including in particular the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat.

The Eritrean delegation is convinced that, if any reform is to be effective, the Security Council must benefit from the trust and confidence of Member States by being representative of all Members, rich and poor, big and small; it must ensure that its decisions — which necessarily affect the lives of people in the most direct manner — are anchored in the rule of law and in respect for the Charter and other international instruments; it must honour treaty agreements to which the United Nations itself is a party and by which it has undertaken the obligation to enforce final and binding decisions made by legal mechanisms created at its behest; it must ensure that its members — particularly its permanent members — overcome the restrictive effects of their respective national interests and that they faithfully carry out the collective responsibility of guarding international peace and security in all parts of the world, without fear or favour; it must be truly transparent, accessible and accountable; and it must benefit from the contributions of non-members — particularly stakeholders — in such matters as conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict confidence-building.

It is for those reasons that the Eritrean delegation supports the position of the Non-Aligned Movement on expanding the membership of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories as well as on the progressive elimination of the veto. The veto has hampered the effectiveness of the Security Council; the process aimed at eliminating the veto must begin so that we may progressively adjust to its inevitable but not hasty elimination.

Any attempt to reform the Security Council will be contingent on the political will of its member States. The world is being warned that a new world order is evolving and that that order brings with it the seeds of future conflict and the possibility of a new epochal war. Do we have the unity of interest and purpose to meet the challenge?

Mr. Kmoníček (Czech Republic): Since the Czech Republic has been actively involved throughout the years in the discussions on Security Council reform, I should like to make a few points with regard to that topic.

More than 11 years after the discussions on Security Council expansion began, the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council has been unable to come up with a realistic, politically acceptable solution that would strengthen the role and functioning of the Security Council. In that respect, we await the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which should place United Nations reform — including reform of the Security Council — in the wider context of global threats and challenges.

Here, let me briefly reiterate the position of the Czech Republic. My country is an advocate of Council expansion in both categories of membership; our choice would be five additional permanent seats and four to five additional non-permanent seats. We believe that the criteria for selecting new permanent members should reflect the candidates' overall influence on world affairs, taking political, economic, military and cultural aspects into account. Readiness to participate in the safeguarding of international peace and security and the capacity to assume greater financial responsibility are crucial for permanent membership. In particular, we support the aspirations of Germany and Japan to permanent seats and the allocation of three additional new permanent seats for Africa, Asia and Latin America. There is no doubt that new permanent members from among the developing countries will help to increase the credibility of the Council.

With regard to the question of the veto, we continue to favour some reduction in the areas where the veto can be applied, possibly through voluntary commitments on the part of permanent members and other steps that do not necessarily require amendment of the Charter.

The Czech Republic considers itself a reform-minded country. We have no vested interest in Security Council reform except for better functioning and greater authority of the Council. We share the majority view that the composition of the Council should be adjusted to the current state of affairs. The present situation is unsustainable; it undermines the legitimacy of the Council's decisions and therefore calls for action. Words can be considered action if action follows them. Let us take action after 11 years of discussions.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): As this is the first time I have addressed the Assembly in your presence, Sir, allow me to express to you my sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly and to assure you of our full cooperation in ensuring the success of its work.

My delegation wishes to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, the current President of the Security Council, for presenting to the Assembly yesterday the report of the Security Council (A/59/2), whose content we fully endorse. We are certain that the report contains elements of great interest to Members of the Organization that will help them to evaluate the Council's work. However, as more than one delegation has already said, we are aware that the report should become a more substantive and analytical instrument so that it will promote a debate on how to improve the Council's functioning in the future.

The Council has already made notable progress in an area particularly important to my delegation: the transparency of the Council's working methods and closer exchanges with other Members of the Organization. The Council must further intensify, if possible, its practice of public meetings, with the effective and widest possible participation of all parties interested in the question under consideration.

Spain is firmly committed to the process of reform of the United Nations as established in the Millennium Declaration. In that context, Spain supports the efforts made to advance the revitalization of the General Assembly and believes that there should be greater reflection on the reform of the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council and the adaptation of the entire United Nations system to the new challenges that led the Secretary-General, whose leadership we applaud, to appoint the High-level Panel that will issue its report on 1 December.

The reform of the United Nations system is among the questions that have generated the most lively discussion in recent weeks in the Assembly. We trust that it will now be possible to make substantial

progress on the urgent and necessary reform and that the whole ensemble of institutions and mechanisms of the Organization will be considered, wherever it is necessary to improve them and make them more effective. Spain is ready to contribute to that process through ideas and constructive dialogue with all Member States.

There is no doubt that within that general reflection aimed at the action we are all urging, the question of Security Council reform is especially important. However, we must clarify that despite its importance, the future development of this question cannot dictate the overall course of the wider reform, which we know the Organization as a whole requires. In other words, that wider reform cannot become hostage to the success or the failure of the attempts to reform the Security Council.

Before spelling out the principles informing the Spanish position on the possible reform of the Security Council, I wish to express my thanks to the former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Julian Hunte, for his leadership in the work of the Open-ended Working Group and the Group's Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Luis Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador and Ambassador Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein. Their report (A/58/47) contributes very interesting information, analysis and reflections on the item under consideration.

Spain seeks a reform of the Security Council based on the safeguarding and the promotion of the greater interests of the Organization and therefore hopes that the reform can be achieved with the broadest consensus of Member States, enhancing the representativeness, democratization, effectiveness and transparency of the Council's work.

To that end, Spain favours an increase of the number of Member States on the Security Council, with the aim of improving the Council's representativeness at a time when the Organization has 191 Member States. We therefore support an increase in the number of non-permanent members so that the various geographical areas are duly represented in that category open to all Member States, through their periodic election by the Assembly, thus strengthening the Council's democratization.

Increasing the number of permanent members is, of course, not the only option. Nor is it the best that can be conceived. Spain does not favour an increase in the number of permanent members, either with or without the veto. The creation of a new category of permanent members without the veto power would not in any way reflect the reality of the international community in the twenty-first century. We are certainly willing to consider formulas that in certain circumstances permit longer periods on the Council. We are convinced that there are States that make a significant contribution to the work of the Organization, and we are certain that it would be possible to find formulas of representation that respond in the best way to the general interests of the United Nations without having to grant certain States the privilege of acceding to the category of permanent members of the Council.

Spain supports addressing the question of limiting the veto power of the permanent members, with the goal of enhancing the Security Council's effectiveness and facilitating the decision-making process, in order to prevent a situation in which a single country could block the Council's action. In that context, formulas could be proposed such as limiting the veto power to resolutions under Chapter VII of the Charter or deciding that the veto, in order to have effect, must be imposed by at least two States.

Spain favours continuing to develop the open and accessible functioning of the Security Council for the benefit of greater transparency and to demonstrate that the Council's work really is being done on behalf of Member States — as the Charter says — and in the interest of the international community and should thus receive the valuable contribution of interested States.

We support the proposal to promote better coordination among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in order to ensure the continuity in the work of the Organization towards the maintenance and consolidation of peace, while safeguarding the responsibilities and the competencies corresponding to each organ in accordance with the Charter.

We also support promoting the exchange of information and coordination between the Security Council and the regional organizations that play a relevant role in conflict prevention and management, in particular, to mention a few, the African Union, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, NATO and the Organization of American States.

Spain supports greater dialogue between the Security Council and civil society, especially the non-governmental organizations, the media and academic, business and union organizations. To that end, the Security Council should improve the established formulas and explore innovative initiatives such as systematic meetings with political, social and economic actors during its missions on the ground and the holding of thematic seminars on current issues of importance to the Council and the international community.

We are faced with an enormous challenge, and we want to face it with a spirit of consensus in order to safeguard and boost the cohesion of our Organization. We hope that our stated basic principles can be taken into account during future discussions of possible reform. We believe they offer an attractive alternative that is more representative and democratic for all Member States, while avoiding unjustified privileges, and open the important organ that is the Security Council to the broader and more active participation of all Members, large and small, of our Organization.

We know that you, Sir, are personally committed to this process, and we therefore assure you of our complete cooperation.

Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to give thanks for the expressions of gratitude made by many delegations in the Hall for the work carried out by Chairman Hunte and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Working Group, in particular with respect to the report of the Working Group on Equitable Representation of the Security Council.

In previous debates, Ecuador has stated that the Security Council must be reformed in order to face present challenges, which are completely different from those that existed at the Organization's inception after the Second World War, more than 50 years ago. Today's world is completely different from that of 1945. Today we are not facing only intergovernmental problems; we are also confronting new, transnational threats such as international terrorism, which require vigorous and effective international coordination. Large or small, all countries face the same problem.

The delegation of Ecuador is grateful for the report of the Security Council, which was introduced by its current President, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom. We consider it an improvement, but we believe that it should be more analytical in nature. It is our view that reforming the Council requires amending the Charter of the United Nations. That is the only way to create an international structure that will allow our Organization truly to meet the needs and expectations of each and every one of our peoples.

Increasing the number of Council members is a step in the right direction, but it is not enough. We have to devise new mechanisms that will make the Security Council more effective in fulfilling its obligations and discharging its mandate. At the same time, the resolutions it adopts must be implemented by the international community as a whole.

Reform must also entail a new definition of the use of power and of the veto. Ecuador believes that no right of veto should exist in an Organization that is based on pluralism and democracy and in which all States are equal. The veto was a necessary concession at the time when the Organization was founded, but circumstances have changed. The use or threat of use of the veto has led to the exercise of power in ways that are of concern -- for instance, what the non-permanent members of the Security Council term the "silent veto" used by the permanent ones. That threat to the equality of States must be eliminated.

The Security Council must become more democratic and more transparent. It has to move in the direction of effectiveness. It must avoid drifting into the exercise of legislative capacities that are not within its mandate. All of these changes can be brought about if there is political will on the part of the Member States. It is imperative that we endeavour to arrive at consensus decisions that will ensure the international system's effectiveness in the quest for peace.

The year 2005 will be the best one for us as Member States to take decisions on changes as fundamental as these, which will enable the Organization to lead the international community.

Ecuador reiterates its desire to cooperate with you, Mr. President, and to contribute, with dedication and hard work, to all activities aimed at bringing about structural reform in the Organization, because we are convinced that this is the only way to achieve a more democratic and equitable international community.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): Mr. President, through you, my delegation thanks Ambassador Emyr

Jones Parry, in his capacity as the President of the Security Council for October, for presenting the Council's report to the General Assembly. I would also take this opportunity to commend Ambassador Wenaweser of Liechtenstein and Ambassador Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador for their leadership in the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the reform of the Security Council.

The issue of equitable representation is not a new matter for the General Assembly. However, at no other time in the last decade has this matter, along with issues related to the reform and revitalization of the United Nations, been more important. Since Secretary-General Kofi Annan's statement at the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly noting "the fork in the road", the international community has become more sensitized and more aware of the distinct possibility that the much-needed changes within the Organization can actually be achieved. Thinking that no changes can be effected can only lead us back to the abysmal and protracted dialogue to which we all have become accustomed.

The United Nations was born out of the ashes of terrible wars, after which it was pledged that we, as a human family, could not ever let such catastrophes occur again.

Sadly — although no world wars have occurred — the incidence of many conflicts since the end of the Second World War means that the international community must stay engaged in the process of preventing conflicts and ensuring that peace prevails. There is a need for a new compact of shared responsibilities in the upholding of the norms of international peace and security.

As we see the need for and importance of attending to conflicts as and when they arise, we also see the need for and importance of conflict prevention. Thus the importance of the work of the Security Council becomes more apparent given the current proliferation of conflicts. The agenda of the Council is continuing to expand, with the holding of a variety of thematic debates, and its importance has increased, especially in relation to the General Assembly. But that does not excuse the General Assembly from accepting its responsibilities.

The revitalization of the General Assembly, in our respectful view, is just as important as the need to address the issue of equitable representation on and reform of the Council.

The issue of equitable representation assumes that there is inequity in the makeup of the Council. Indeed, many have already stated in this debate that the Council was born during a different era and that its contemporary form needs to reflect the realities of today. The Council therefore needs to be more representative of today's global community.

While we reiterate our position that both Japan and Germany should be rightly assigned permanent seats on the Council, with equal privileges, we also believe that all regions should be fairly represented. We contend that one permanent seat each should be allotted to the following regions: Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Likewise, an additional four seats should be allotted to the same regions in the non-permanent membership category.

In relation to the veto, we support the contention that, while all permanent members should have it, it should be restricted to Chapter VII issues. We also believe that, where it is proposed to be used in other areas, particularly in a reformed Council, it should be exercised only when two or more members agree to use it in such a manner.

In conclusion, the reality is that not every United Nations Member State can become a member of the Council. The 58-year history of the United Nations and the Council bears out this fact.

For many small States, having a voice on the Council is also important, but we are probably better served by other Members which have the capacity to be effective members of the Council. Given that the membership is limited — even under a reformed Council — it is not appropriate, in our view, to assume that the primary focus of members of the Security Council is merely to serve their national interests.

In that regard, let me point to the example of Ireland's previous membership on the Council, which remains a good indicator of what a Member State can do for others when there is goodwill.

Mr. Stagno Ugarte (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first of all, to thank the President of the Security Council, the permanent representative of the United Kingdom, for having introduced the report of that body to the General Assembly. We commend the efforts of the Security Council to make

this report a more concise and analytical document, and we urge them to proceed along the same path.

Today's debate has an indispensable part to play in the operation of this Organization. In accordance with the principle enshrined in the Charter of a balance of power among the various bodies, the Security Council is required to present its report to the General Assembly. The Assembly, therefore, has the obligation to carefully examine the work of the Council over the past year, commending it for its successes and pointing out any particular areas in which the work of the Council requires improvement or changes.

The Security Council is an executive body that is able to act promptly and is competent to handle specific situations that pose imminent threats to international peace and security. The Security Council is in the best position to take effective measures in emergency situations. The General Assembly, on the other hand, is the plenary deliberative body of the international community. Only the Assembly can express the firm and definitive opinion of all the countries of the world. Only the Assembly has the legitimacy conferred upon it by its universal and democratic composition. Since the Council acts on behalf of the Members of the Organization, in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter, it must periodically report to the Assembly on its activities.

In this context, Costa Rica approves, in general terms, the work of the Council over the past year. From the Caribbean to the South Pacific, from the Horn of Africa to the Balkans, the work of the Council has served to reduce international tension and build peace. It has facilitated the distribution of humanitarian assistance in Haiti. It has encouraged political negotiations in the Great Lakes region of Africa. It has contributed to the political stability of Timor-Leste. Those are important achievements and should not be passed over in silence.

However, in other areas, the work of the Council requires improvement or a shift in emphasis. My country would have liked to see it act in a more resolute manner in promoting peace in the Middle East. We would have liked it to consult and coordinate to a greater degree with regional mechanisms in the case of Haiti. We would like to see it acting more prudently in terms of adopting general standards. The Security Council is not a legislative body. According to the Charter, its mandate is confined to specific situations or specific disputes that endanger international peace and security. According to the Charter, the Council can adopt binding measures only in so far as they are addressed to specific conflicts. Adopting general standards is reserved to the international community as a whole on the basis of negotiated treaties or the gradual formation of binding customs.

As regards combating international terrorism, it is indispensable for the Council to respond positively to the appeal of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and enshrine human rights as the cornerstone of the struggle against terrorism. The Council must make sure that any measures adopted against international terrorism are in keeping with human rights and international humanitarian law, and in particular the principles of due process and non-refoulement. It is particularly indispensable that the Council adopt clear guidelines so that the inclusion or removal of the names of individuals from sanctions lists is more respectful of the high international standards of evidence and due process.

Costa Rica welcomes the work of the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC). This body, which is an ad hoc body set up temporarily, now plays an important role in the international community's efforts to combat that crime. But we believe that combating terrorism must become a permanent activity of the United Nations. This is why we think this task should be assigned to a permanent, professional, impartial standing body situated at the core of the organic structure of our institution. In this context, I would like to reiterate the proposal made on 22 September by the President of Costa Rica, Abel Pacheco de la Espriella, when he proposed establishing a high commissioner of the United Nations against terrorism. This proposal appears in document A/59/383.

As regards preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, we urge the Security Council to fully comply with the obligations arising under article III, section B, paragraph 4, and article XII, section C, of the International Atomic Energy Agency Statute regarding the non-proliferation treaty, and article VI of the Biological Weapons Convention.

Further, we urge the Council to reduce the number of requests for information it sends to Member States, concentrating only on States whose reports are

deficient, or in respect of which there is evidence that the implementation of the necessary measures is truly inadequate.

The Security Council should also reduce the number of thematic debates it holds and should focus exclusively on topics directly related to specific situations that endanger international peace and security. By their very nature, many of the topics should be considered by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and not by the Security Council.

We also appeal to the Security Council to present to the General Assembly special reports under Article 34, paragraph 3, of the Charter every time it wants to set up a new peacekeeping operation, whenever it substantially modifies a mandate or sets up a new sanctions regime. Similarly, the Security Council should report to the General Assembly whenever a draft resolution has been vetoed. The General Assembly, in discharging its function, should examine those reports carefully in order to adopt recommendations that, within the scope of its own competencies, support the decisions of the Security Council or, whenever a veto has been cast, make up for the failure to act.

As for reform of the Security Council, we consider it necessary to fully implement the principles already enshrined in the Charter, in particular the principles of sovereign equality among all States and equitable geographic distribution. From this perspective, it goes without saying that the current composition of the Council is undemocratic. A single regional group, which accounts for 14.7 per cent of the Member States, holds 60 per cent of the veto power and 33 per cent of the membership in the Security Council. In the meantime, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, which taken as a whole constitute 74.3 per cent of the Member States, represent only 53 per cent of the membership on the Council. Furthermore, within our group, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), 14 States — 45 per cent of our membership — have never had the chance of serving on the Security Council. These statistics show you that reforming the Security Council is urgent.

However, over the past 10 years, the process of Security Council reform has focused mostly on the creation of new permanent seats. Thus, over the past few years, different principles have been proposed on which to base the selection of new permanent members. Some have suggested that population size be taken into consideration. Others have said that the contribution of candidates to the budget should count. Others have advocated the importance of participation in peacekeeping or economic development. All those principles are valid; however, if we were to apply them all at the same time, several dozen nations would quite legitimately deserve to become permanent members of the Council. From a practical point of view, however, that would not work.

Hence, if we truly want to reform the Council, we will have to focus, for the time being, on increasing the number of elected members. In that regard, Costa Rica advocates the prompt creation of 10 new non-permanent seats in the Security Council, three of which should be allocated to Africa, three to Asia, one to Eastern Europe, one to Western European and other States and two to Latin America and the Caribbean. In a few years, when the international situation has stabilized, we could consider the possibility of creating more permanent members.

In conclusion, my delegation considers that it would not be advisable to modify paragraph 2 of Article 23 of the Charter. The prohibition of immediate re-election is a democratic guarantee that enables the smaller States, at least once in their history, to belong to the Security Council.

Mr. Dzundev (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): I would like to make a short statement in the joint debate on the report of the Security Council and on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

My delegation would like to welcome the holding of a number of open meetings of the Security Council over the past year. That approach improves the quality of the work of the Council and should contribute to its decision-making process. It also brings more transparency to the Council's work.

Regarding the issue of transparency, let me also recall the importance of the Security Council having early consultations with Member States before taking decisions that affect them. That can contribute to better understanding not only of the Council's work, but also of the implications of the decisions it takes and of compliance by Member States.

The practice of holding open meetings is also evidence of the change in the Council's work patterns, although one can argue that not all the issues immediately fall under the main responsibility of the Security Council. But today, the efforts at maintaining international peace and security should not be seen only in the context of the traditional role and practice of the Council as in the past, but also in terms of addressing problems that are the cause of conflict, which is no less important than addressing the direct threats themselves. Awareness of the fact that the world is changing and that we are confronted with new challenges justifies the new approach by the Security Council. That is yet another argument in favour of the need to reform the Security Council to become a more credible and representative body.

Like other delegations, my delegation is looking forward to the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change; among other issues of key importance to the new role and response of the United Nations, the report should set out proposals on reform of the Security Council. The proposals should be openly discussed among Member States with a view to obtaining action-oriented results and, to the extent possible, general agreement.

With the new increased role of the Security Council in mind, one can legitimately raise the question of Council reform, in particular regarding the necessity to expand the membership. The deliberations on that issue in recent years and the general debate at this session have led us to the conviction that there is a widespread view among United Nations Members that in this new era and acknowledging the new realities and confronting the new challenges, it is necessary to have a reformed and expanded Security Council. That expansion should bring the Council more credibility and should contribute to the effectiveness of its work.

The view of my delegation is that the Security Council must be reformed through increasing its membership from both developing and developed countries to ensure better geographical representation, and also to strengthen it in substance. As President Crvenkovski stated in this year's general debate, at the 9th plenary meeting, Macedonia is supporting the increase in the membership of the Security Council, in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories.

However, the expanded role and membership of the Security Council should not make the role of the General Assembly less important or less visible. While we are aware of the importance of reforming the Security Council, we also need to strengthen the role of the General Assembly and that of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. McDonald (Ireland): The debate we are having today is a welcome step towards providing a more focused and coherent agenda for the work of the General Assembly. Ireland supports the recent improvements in the working methods of the Security Council and is firmly of the view that they need to be further developed.

One year ago, the Secretary-General announced the establishment of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change to recommend reforms for our collective security system. We await the Panel's report and the Secretary-General's recommendations, which will follow.

The essential requirement, however, is a more effective system of collective security. Such a system requires, as my Foreign Minister said in his speech here last month at the 8th plenary meeting, the unique legitimacy offered by an effective United Nations and its Charter. It is now very clear that the composition of the Security Council no longer accurately reflects global geographical realities. Here again, my Foreign Minister expressed his view that a modest and regionally balanced increase in its membership, both permanent and non-permanent, is justified.

However, whatever the size and composition of the Security Council, the obligation of Member States to comply with the decisions of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security remains a bedrock of the collective security system. Ireland is firmly of the view that this system needs to be strengthened through more substantial and meaningful cooperation among the United Nations membership, the General Assembly and the Security Council.

In that regard the report of the Council before us today (A/59/2) is one useful route that can be pursued. It is complete and informative as far as it goes. However, it lacks the elements of a more political and analytical focus which, we consider, would contribute to a more informative and meaningful debate.

The need for that type of substantive debate is all the greater given that the Security Council

interpretation of international peace and security has broadened and has moved into semi-legislative areas. As we move further into that more complex field, which has implications for the citizens of the States Members of the United Nations, we have greater need for a methodology that enables each Member State to explain clearly the whys and wherefores of decisions made in New York in a manner which our electorates can comprehend.

In that respect, the annual debate in this forum should afford the membership the opportunity to have a necessary debate on the strategic direction of the Council. It is even more the case that we need to foster a broader sense of both ownership and responsibility which can be shared by all the membership of the United Nations. That can realistically be brought about by only a year-round effort by the Security Council to involve all of us in its ongoing work.

My delegation, of course, welcomes the steps which have been taken to create a greater sense of engagement; we welcome all practical steps which can be taken to that end. We would also welcome a development of the dialogue with regional organizations. Ireland welcomes the increasing role of regional and subregional organizations in crisis management, under the overall authority of the Security Council.

While we await the outcome of the work of the High-level Panel and the formal adoption of balanced reforms for our collective security system, my delegation stands ready to support practical steps which may be taken to better engage all the membership in all aspects of the work of the United Nations.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): I should like to join previous speakers in expressing my delegation's sincere appreciation to Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom and President of the Security Council for the current month, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2003 to 31 July 2004 (A/59/2). The report provides us with information on activities on a wide range of issues dealt with by the Council during the past year. The situations in Iraq, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur in the Sudan have prominently figured in the Council's work.

Also outlined in the report are the Council's efforts in its work to take on board the broader membership of the United Nations. Open debates on issues of wide interest, monthly briefings to the General Assembly President by the Council President and consultations with troop-contributing countries are some of the positive changes that have occurred over time.

Nepal commends those improvements and encourages the Council to redouble its efforts to make its reporting richer in substance and its approach more user-friendly. However, the report falls far short of meeting the reasonable expectations of non-Council members that it should provide deeper, analytical insight into the working of the Council. A response to that demand made by the general membership of the United Nations to the Council is long overdue. The Council should not rest on its laurels. There is still a profound need to improve transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in its work.

Lack of transparency in the Council's work has been a consistent, major bone of contention between the permanent members and the general membership of the United Nations. We understand that, every so often, the Council has to engage in discreet consultations to arrive at urgent and sensitive decisions. But the fact remains that it cannot fulfil its objectives by itself and must rely on the goodwill, support and compliance from the broader international community in order to do its job well. And the Council can have those only by reaching out to all Members and letting them participate in the decision-making process at various stages. Hence, the current degree of opaqueness in the Council's work is hard to justify, and even harder to appreciate.

Peacekeeping operations are a case in point. The Council now has 16 missions throughout the world, including political ones, aimed at keeping the peace and facilitating political processes in troubled countries. More than 100 countries have sent troops or personnel to those missions. It is an enormous task, and the Security Council can accomplish it only with the willing cooperation of troop-contributing and financing countries.

Nepal supports the peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan, Burundi, Kosovo, Afghanistan and other countries engulfed by conflict. We welcome the

growing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in keeping peace and promoting regional stability, and underline the need for the institutionalization of that mechanism.

For over four decades, Nepal has been an active partner of the United Nations in its peacekeeping efforts. We are proud that more than 45,000 Nepalese nationals have already served as Blue Helmets — and served with distinction. Forty-seven valiant Nepalese have laid down their lives in the service of humanity and peace.

Currently, more than 2,600 Nepalese security personnel are being deployed in 12 missions, and by the end of this month, their number is likely to have grown to over 3,200. Many of them are working in the most difficult areas of the most complex missions. The United Nations and the host countries appreciate their unwavering commitment and outstanding service to peace.

It is a matter of serious concern that of late members of the Security Council, particularly permanent members, have deployed few or no troops in peacekeeping missions, although they enjoy the permanent membership and veto power on the basis of the presumption that they are the kingpins in the maintenance of international peace and security. Nepal urges the permanent members of the Council to contribute sizeable numbers of troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Nepal is concerned that the Security Council has been stepping on the toes of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council by moving into the ambit of thematic issues. Even more disturbing are the growing forays by the Security Council into the legislative domain, using Chapter VII of the Charter. This infringement undermines the existing principles of international law and the treaty-making process, and undercuts the mandate of the General Assembly.

Various Security Council resolutions have created execution and reporting obligations for Member States. Resolutions 1373 (2001), 1540 (2004) and 1267 (1999) are some of them. Nepal has been exerting its best efforts to implement those resolutions and to report on time. But resource constraints have made it very difficult for us to sustain our compliance. The Council should therefore help Nepal and other least developed countries to mobilize financial and technical support and assistance in order to build capacity and fill the resource gap.

Nepal commends the work carried out by the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters, and applauds the initiative taken by the former President of the General Assembly. It is our position that we must agree on all six areas that the Working Group has identified — the size of the Council, regional representation, criteria, the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, accountability and the use of the veto — in order to arrive at a viable consensus for Council reform.

For the past several years, Nepal has supported the expansion of the Council's membership, both in the permanent and the non-permanent categories, so as to make the Council more effective and more representative. We have also strongly called for greater transparency and democracy in the Council's work.

Consistent with this, the Council should undergo a limited expansion to preserve its agility and effectiveness; the current 1:2 ratio between permanent members and non-permanent members must be maintained. Larger countries have always participated more frequently than smaller ones as non-permanent members of the Council. What would make the Council truly democratic would be to give small States the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Council. That must be ensured in an expanded Council.

I would like to draw the attention of Member States to the statement that Nepal's head of delegation delivered in the general debate. In his statement, he underlined that the aspirations of some Member States, including India, Japan, Germany and Brazil, merited serious consideration for permanent membership. I reaffirm the statement made by the minister. Africa must also have a permanent seat in an enlarged Council.

The sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations would be an opportune time to transform the Security Council. By the end of this year, the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change would have presented its report giving Member States ample time to reflect on its recommendations. But if Member States fail to arrive at a consensus on the expansion in the permanent membership category, then efforts must

be exerted to enlarge the non-permanent category, pending expansion of the permanent one.

Nepal believes, as per Article 24, paragraph 3, and Article 15, paragraph 1 of the Charter, that the Council is responsible to report to the General Assembly on the measures it adopts for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Assembly is empowered to provide guidance to the Council. Therefore, the Assembly must rise to its own obligations.

Council members ought to be accountable to the wider membership of the United Nations and should be able to rise above their national interests. In this context, the manner in which veto power is being used does not inspire confidence and weakens the credibility of the Council as an unbiased arbiter in the realm of international peace and security. In fact, Nepal strongly supports the eventual elimination of veto power and calls on Member States to work out a formula to rationalize its use until it is abolished.

Resolute measures are critical to making the Security Council a guardian of international peace and security, for which it was established. Concerted efforts to achieve the collective goal of humanity will strengthen the Council and the United Nations as a whole. This is the challenge that confronts us today.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): May I begin by welcoming the report of the Security Council contained in document A/59/2, introduced yesterday by Sir Emyr Jones Parry. I note that once again the report points to the increased workload of the Council. It is encouraging that, in spite of this, the Council has held a number of open meetings throughout the year. I strongly hope that this practice will continue and, if possible, be expanded.

Sweden, too, is a strong supporter of Security Council reform. We believe that, as the world changes, so must the Council. It must be able to manage change in order to stay relevant, representative and efficient. Its composition must be adapted to mirror today's world and to address today's global challenges.

The debate on Security Council reform has been going on for over a decade. As we approach next year's important summit, it is high time to come to an agreement. If we fail now, we might fail for a long time to come. Sweden is ready to shoulder its responsibility.

Fortunately, this year, we have seen some progress in the debate. Much credit goes to the Secretary-General, who, by establishing the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, has been instrumental in creating today's political momentum. We trust that the Panel's recommendations, to be issued in December, will be concrete, creative and bold. They should provide us with impetus, thus enabling us to build consensus on the main reform of the Security Council, and paving the way for a formal decision at the next General Assembly session. We should use this window of opportunity.

For many years, Sweden has taken an active part in the endeavours to reach consensus on far-reaching reform. We remain committed to that goal. We believe that for the Council to fulfil its crucial role in our collective security system it must be legitimate and relevant. This could be achieved by enlarging the membership of the Security Council to make it more representative.

Since the adoption of the United Nations Charter, a limited number of countries across the globe have emerged as key political and economic Powers. They should be given a role in the work of the Security Council that is commensurate to their importance. In addition, an enlarged Security Council must ensure the legitimate interests of small and medium-sized countries. As an option for the future, Sweden does not rule out a joint seat for the European Union (EU).

An expansion of the Security Council should not be allowed to undermine its efficiency. A way to make the Council's work more effective would be to limit the use of the veto power, and the efforts to modernize the working procedures of the Security Council need to continue.

In December, we will find ourselves at yet another important juncture. This time, we cannot afford to fail.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly decided to consider both the report of the Security Council contained in document A/59/2 and the reform of the Council in a joint debate. Both questions are clearly interlinked, and both are crucial for our Organization.

I am participating in this debate, and my delegation would like to start by making some general comments before coming to the two items in question.

The first general comment has to do with the consideration of the report of the Security Council by the General Assembly and the requirement to do so. This requirement is contained in the Charter, and it presents an ideal opportunity for the United Nations family, through the General Assembly, to consider how this organ — to which the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security has been entrusted — did its job throughout the reporting period. In this respect, here are a few points I would like to make.

Article 15, paragraph 1, of the Charter very clearly states,

> "The General Assembly shall receive and consider annual and special reports from the Security Council; these reports shall include an account of the measures that the Security Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security."

Paragraph 3 of Article 24 states that the Security Council shall submit annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration.

Those two Articles of the Charter take us right to the heart of the question of the intertwined competences of the General Assembly and the Security Council in the area of the maintenance of peace. We believe that they clearly demonstrate the Assembly's pre-eminence and central position in deliberations on international peace and security.

The present debate is therefore important in the framework of the revitalization and the strengthening of the General Assembly's authority. Accordingly, we continue to stress that this debate should not merely consist of general statements. The Security Council should reflect in its work the comments and the proposals made in the Assembly. In that regard, we propose that the General Committee, at the conclusion of the consideration of this item, make a synthesis of the comments and observations on the Security Council and that the Council convene a meeting to examine those observations.

My second general observation concerns enlarging the Security Council, which my country has always considered to be of special importance. Members will recall that in 1963, Cameroon cosponsored the draft resolution adopted as resolution 1991 (XVIII) of 17 December 1963, which increased from 6 to 10 the number of non-permanent members on the Council. Similarly, noting that the membership of the United Nations had increased from 113 Members in 1960 to 154, Cameroon was one of the initiators of draft resolution A/35/L.34/Rev.1, which aimed to increase the number to 16. Unfortunately, that draft resolution was not adopted. We are pleased to note that among the proposals now before the Assembly on the increase in the number of non-permanent Council seats, the number of 16 seats has been retained, at least by Africa and the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Having made those general comments, I shall address the two items under consideration. First, with respect to the report of the Security Council (A/59/2), taking into account the recommendations made by States when considering the report, the Security Council — and we pay tribute to it for this — made some important improvements to the text of the report before the Assembly. The report was first submitted to the Assembly in its current, synthesized form in October 2002, under Cameroon's presidency of the Security Council. In that context, I convey to our friend and colleague Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry our appreciation for the high quality of his masterful introduction to this excellent and comprehensive report containing a wealth of useful information.

The Council has worked hard over the reporting period to improve both the transparency of its work and, above all, its treatment of crucial questions related to the maintenance of international peace and security. Understandably, I shall use the example of Africa. We are pleased to note in the report that Africa remains the Security Council's foremost concern. Thirty-one of 61 resolutions, 74 of the 213 meetings of the Council, 20 of 45 presidential statements and 15 of its 27 official communiqués were devoted to Africa. We also note that four of the five sanctions committees that published reports during the reporting period deal with African countries. We had the privilege of chairing the Security Council's informal working group on sanctions, and we appreciated the importance and the usefulness of sanctions, in particular targeted sanctions, for peacekeeping and peace-building, particularly in Africa.

At the present time, the outcome of the multidimensional action of the Security Council on Africa can be clearly seen. With the exception of six or

seven countries, Africa is enjoying relative political stability.

Furthermore, we appreciate the Security Council's efforts further to develop fruitful cooperation with regional organizations. In that respect, we underline Central Africa's determination, through the Economic Community of Central African States, to organize to promote peace and development. To that end, it has established structures within the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, known as COPAX.

Central Africa wishes to strengthen cooperation not only with the Security Council but with the entire United Nations system. That is why we continue to stress that we in Central Africa should be given permanent political structures to coordinate United Nations action.

With respect to the question of the increase of the membership of the Council, next year the Organization will celebrate its sixtieth birthday, and the United Nations has fixed the year 2005 to review progress on the discussion of reform and on implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

The debate on Security Council reform has been going on for 11 years. The peoples of the United Nations are waiting with impatience and with hope for Security Council reform to be achieved. Despite the many difficulties, we are duty-bound to complete the reform process. Last year, when the Secretary-General addressed the fifty-eighth session, he warned that the difficulty of reaching agreement does not excuse our failure to do so. The Secretary-General's observation remains true.

The great majority of Member States agree on an increase in the number of Security Council members in both categories. It is therefore urgent that we agree on the modalities for such an increase. Ideas and proposals in that regard were already formulated by delegations during the consultations held in previous meetings of the Open-ended Working Group. We hope that the conclusions, proposals and recommendations that we hope will be made by the High-level Panel will add further substance to our discussions and debates so that we can take decisions.

Here, Mr. President, I should pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Julian Hunte, for his innovative proposals on the form of our debates. It is now up to you to continue on the course charted by your predecessor, bearing in mind — as you yourself indicated at the close of the general debate — the forceful reference, made in their statements by the leaders of 140 States, to this issue of Security Council expansion.

Africa, for its part, made known its proposals on expansion in the Harare Declaration of 1997. Our continent expressed its wish to have seven seats, comprising five non-permanent seats and two permanent seats, allocated by rotation in a Security Council expanded to 26 members. My country — as we indicated during the general debate — fully supports the Declaration, which we believe remains valid.

In that connection, we should strongly emphasize that Security Council reform must also take into account the legitimate desire of all Member States — rich and poor, large and small — to serve the cause of peace. I hear people say that they doubt that there are good reasons for such an expansion, for reasons of effectiveness. Effectiveness is often mentioned to oppose Council expansion. In our view, that stems from a concept of the criterion for contributing to the maintenance of peace that is limited to a State's military means or its capacity to intervene. We are often told — and this is very important — that people often forget that an organization's effectiveness depends not only on the speed of decision-making; it is also tied to meeting the objective being sought by the various members of that organization.

In addition, people forget that contribution to the maintenance of peace also results from steadfastness in peace negotiations. Contribution to the maintenance of peace results from steadfastness in mediation to put an end to conflicts. In that regard, States that are small or that lack great military power can make a remarkable contribution to the maintenance of peace. We might wonder, then, whether the current composition of the Council has always guaranteed great effectiveness and speed in taking decisions and acting on them.

One year before the symbolic meetings commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, my country appeals for calmness, serenity and a spirit of compromise so that we can swiftly arrive at a consensual solution that will guarantee the unity of the Organization and the sought-after effectiveness of

the Security Council. Cameroon, for its part, remains open to dialogue and to consensus at every level.

Mr. Grey-Johnson (Gambia): My delegation commends the Security Council for a detailed and comprehensive report (A/59/2), which shows how fully engaged the Council has remained on all the key issues. We commend all its members for their hard work and dedication over the past year.

While it is true that the Middle East has accounted for a good part of the Council's time, it is also very clear that much more needs to be done to effectively contain the situation in that region. Attention must be focused more sharply on the Israeli-Palestinian question, and more concrete measures must be devised to get all concerned to begin moving towards the ultimate objective of the road map: the creation of a Palestinian State existing side by side and peacefully with the State of Israel.

There is no gainsaying the fact that, in spite of the Council's efforts, the situation deteriorated further during this reporting period. Settlements and refugee camps are being attacked on a regular basis, while suicide bombers cause havoc among innocent civilians. The whole world, meanwhile, watches helplessly as casualties rise from day to day. My delegation urges the Council to act urgently and more aggressively to bring the situation under control. For there is no doubt that the Israeli-Palestinian issue is what inspires and drives a number of other conflict situations elsewhere.

For a start, the Council may wish to consider measures aimed at fully enforcing the ruling of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the occupied Palestinian territory. It is indeed a matter of regret that it is over the salient issues surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian question that the Council often cannot reach agreement, as evidenced by the number of draft resolutions on that question that it has not been able to adopt.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the ending of the occupation of Iraq with the transfer of sovereignty to an Interim Iraqi Government. We look forward to the Council's continued engagement with that Government as it moves forward with the political transition. The security situation in that country gives much cause for concern and will definitely affect the degree of United Nations involvement in the political process. Even so, the Council must do all it can to assist in putting out the fires of war and in restoring a more normal and more bearable life for the suffering Iraqi people.

The Council's achievements in Africa have been commendable. Peacekeeping and peace-building efforts have shown remarkable results, particularly in West Africa. Significant progress has been made in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea-Bissau. Improvements have been slower in Côte d'Ivoire. That requires us all to do more to enable all parties in that conflict to subsume their individual differences in the greater interest of the Ivorian people and then to return to the negotiating table to begin implementing the Linas-Marcoussis Accord.

Special challenges continue to be presented to the Council by the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the situation in Burundi. Those situations call for a sharper focus on the causes and antecedents of the conflicts in those countries with a view to ensuring that they are properly addressed and, if possible, rooted out.

In all the post-conflict situations in Africa, particularly in West Africa, what stands out in bold relief is the need for appropriate interventions to relaunch economic growth in ways that will have a positive impact on the lives of the people. That is the only insurance against a relapse into conflict for, as has been amply demonstrated, poverty, deprivation and economic marginalization are the major factors that give rise to violent upheaval. Addressing those issues in post-conflict situations therefore constitutes an important contribution to the consolidation of peace. Regrettably, this aspect of peace-building has been severely downplayed, as evidenced by the dire situations in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and, to a lesser extent, Sierra Leone. In fact, in Guinea-Bissau, when the army recently mutinied over salary arrears this almost led to the collapse of the peace-building effort and the political process. Fortunately, the situation was contained, albeit with the sad loss of life of the chief of the armed forces and a few of his colleagues. But if things had crumbled the cost to the international community of putting them back on track would have been enormous. It therefore seems more cost-effective to provide the investments necessary to stimulate economic growth in ways that will create jobs and ensure that the workforce, especially the youth, are gainfully employed and have the opportunity to earn realistic incomes.

My delegation is aware that the Council did indeed hold a public meeting on the role of business in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building and commends it for that initiative. We are also aware that the Council has been working with the Economic and Social Council on some of those issues. Equally, the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa continues to actively pursue its mandate. We can only hope that through its work the Council will find the means to shore up peace-building gains in ways that address the need for economic growth and employment creation in post-conflict areas, so that the surrounding socio-economic environment in post-conflict situations ceases to constitute an important trigger of conflict.

A second area of concern has to do with the need to realign militaries in post-conflict situations to the peacetime needs of their countries. Oftentimes, it is their very inability to act like peacetime militaries that gives rise to a cycle of instability and violence. Countries emerging from conflict should be assisted to restructure their armed forces and scale them down to fit the needs of a country at peace. The Council should pay urgent attention to that issue.

We commend the Council for its efforts in working with African regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations to find solutions to some of the daunting problems that have dogged progress on the African continent. We urge the Council to continue and even to intensify that process so that synergy is generated among all major actors in the search for answers to our problems relating to peace, security and development.

There is general agreement among all Member States that the present composition of the Security Council does not mirror present-day global realities or even the present pattern of membership of the United Nations. The Gambia has always joined those Member States that have called for action to have that anomaly redressed. The Open-ended Working Group on reform of the Security Council certainly covered some ground during the fifty-eighth session and it is to be expected that its achievements will be complemented by the work of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

My delegation reiterates once more the position of the African Union that Africa must be represented on the Security Council in the permanent category, as well as having its representation in the non-permanent category increased. Countries such as Japan, which make important contributions to the operations of the Organization, must also be considered for a permanent seat on the Council. My delegation hopes that during this session much progress will be made towards bringing this lingering question to final closure.

Mr. Kaludjerović (Serbia and Montenegro): Allow me at the outset to express the appreciation of my delegation to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council (A/59/2).

As stated in the report, over the past 12 months the Security Council has addressed a wide range of issues, from those directly threatening international peace and security — such as acute crises — to those of a global character involving the fight against terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, peacekeeping operations and other thematic issues that are of no less importance in the present-day world.

The involvement of the Security Council on a wide range of issues reaffirms its role in today's interdependent world. But it also points to the need for it to adapt to current international circumstances. The political picture of the world has changed to the point where it is necessary to reform the structure of the United Nations, and particularly that of the Security Council, as the Organization's key body. In our view, such reform should primarily involve more equitable representation and, by extension, more balanced participation among developed and developing countries. In effecting those reforms we have to take into account the responsibility of those countries that make the greatest contributions to the United Nations, particularly to peacekeeping operations, as well as their legitimate interests. At the same time, an overwhelming majority of countries, including newly established ones, should be adequately represented so as to avoid exclusiveness in the decision-making process. In that regard, we strongly believe that the Group of Eastern European States should be granted one additional non-permanent seat on an expanded Security Council.

Transparency in the work of the Security Council is highly relevant to the strengthening of international solidarity and responsibility. In that regard, we highly value the practice introduced by some members of the Security Council of briefing the broader membership on the Council's activities. We are also encouraged by the number of open meetings in which other Member States are invited to participate.

Peacekeeping operations are one of the most important tools for the Security Council to maintain international peace and security. That was clearly demonstrated last year with the establishment of a number of new United Nations peacekeeping missions — in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Haiti, as well as the monitoring mission in Iraq. A comprehensive approach to the issue of peacekeeping operations, with clear goals and legal criteria used to define their mandates, will greatly facilitate the establishment of peace and improve the efficiency of peacekeeping operations. Setting up new missions — which today are much more diverse in character, encompassing both conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace, including post-conflict reconstruction and long-term social development — requires a multidisciplinary approach to complex crises, particularly those on the African continent.

Terrorism continues to pose a grave threat of global proportions. As stated in the report, over the past year there has been an increase in both the number and gravity of terrorist attacks, which is why the fight against terrorism should remain one of the major areas of engagement of Security Council.

In that respect, the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which obliges Member States to adopt and enforce appropriate and effective laws and to undertake administrative measures with a view to preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, is of vital significance. My country fully supports the activities of the Security Council in that field.

A considerable part of the report of the Security Council is devoted to my country. The fact that during the reporting period Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro addressed Security Council meetings on two occasions testifies to the difficult situation in our province of Kosovo and Metohija. We fully concur with the assessment in the report that mid-March violence led by Kosovo Albanian extremists against the minority Serb community "had been an organized, widespread and targeted campaign and represented a huge setback to stabilization and reconciliation in the province" and that "violence had challenged the sustainability of the international community's efforts to build a multi-ethnic Kosovo" (*ibid., p. 15*).

We expect the Security Council to exert additional pressure on the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo and Metohija to implement two key sections of the Kosovo Standards Implementation Plan: sustainable returns and the rights of communities and their members, and freedom of movement. We also expect the Security Council to do its utmost to speed up the reconstruction efforts of destroyed churches and monasteries that represent not only part of the Serbian, but an integral part of the European cultural heritage.

I would like to take this opportunity to recall the words of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro, Mr. Vuk Drašković, at the Security Council meeting on 11 May 2004, as cited in the report: "that the 'standards before status' policy must provide for full security, right to life and other human, civil and ethnic rights of Serbs and other minority communities in Kosovo" (*ibid.*).

Survival, life in peace and security as well as the right to return are basic preconditions without which it will not be possible to make progress in Kosovo and Metohija. The European character of Kosovo and Metohija within Serbia and Montenegro, based on European standards of minority protection, decentralization and border access, is equally in the interest of Albanians, Serbs and other non-Albanian populations in the province.

In that regard, we expect that the appointment of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Mr. Søren Jessen-Petersen, will mark a new, more action-oriented, active and constructive approach of the international community to the problem.

The completion strategy of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which is mentioned in the report, is in the interest of Serbia and Montenegro and is in line with its efforts to fully honour international obligations and actively cooperate with the Tribunal, particularly in view of

transferring some trials to national courts. The competent authorities of my country will urgently inform the ICTY of the measures undertaken to track down persons indicted by the Tribunal.

Warrants have recently been issued for the arrest of four Generals sought by the Tribunal. The National Council for Cooperation with the Tribunal granted waivers on 1 October 2004 to 30 witnesses to testify on classified military issues and made a decision to transmit documents requested by the Tribunal.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that, like other Member States, we are looking forward to the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, particularly concerning conflict prevention, the link between peace and development and the need to address root causes with a view to preventing, managing and resolving complex crises.

Mr. Maqueira (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): The President of Chile, His Excellency Mr. Ricardo Lagos Escobar, said when addressing the General Assembly, at the 4th meeting,

> "If we wish to strengthen multilateralism, reform of the United Nations is becoming increasingly necessary. Its ideals and founding purposes remain valid, but ... the power structure upon which the Organization was built at its inception corresponds to a world that is very different from today's world."

By its very nature, the Security Council is at the centre of the exercise in renewal. We must have a more representative, transparent and democratic Security Council on which we can rely — in other words, a body that enjoys all the prerequisites that determine whether an organ is legitimate. We also need a more efficient and effective Security Council, in other words, more functional. We know that we need not only to enlarge the Council but to make it more democratic in a thorough reform of the Organization.

The many statements we have heard here confirm that reform is timely from a political perspective, and that implies two important dimensions — the Security Council, on the one hand, and the reorganization of the rest of the system, on the other.

The Security Council is central to reform, but it is not the only element of reform that is necessary, nor should it serve as a pretext to distract us from the rest of the reforms required to strengthen multilateralism within the Organization. That is because organizations must reflect political realities. The Security Council, together with the other main bodies of the system, all need to be adjusted and made more functional with streamlined agendas. Similarly, we should examine the relationship between the Security Council and the other principal organs of the system.

It is important for the work of the Council to carefully consider the relationship between the global and the regional, as dealt with in Chapter VIII of the Charter. That applies in terms of prevention, management and exit strategies for crises. To some extent, we have to look at the functioning of the Council in sensitive areas, such as the responsibility to protect, as well as preventive action. Those aspects must be regulated and guidelines provided — goals shared by the international community — failing which multilateral effectiveness could be weakened.

We renew our support for the work of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, appointed by the Secretary-General, and we emphasize that great expectations await its recommendations. We should voice our confidence that the Panel will produce options, perspectives and alternatives that can contribute to a comprehensive political compromise where all countries will feel they have benefited. That may be the most difficult part of the exercise — even more difficult than finding a common perspective concerning the reform process.

In addition to the reform of the Council, Chile has upheld a position that I will describe as follows: we have supported the expansion of the membership of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories, in order to facilitate the greatest possible participation by developing countries.

We trust that the Panel will be able to contribute ideas that will enable the Secretary-General to make recommendations that will facilitate a political compromise in favour of expansion, and that those will be accepted by the international community as a whole.

We have also supported limiting the veto. We have supported adopting decisions under Article 18 of the Charter, which calls for two thirds of the membership of the Organization to agree. Chile would have preferred a consensus for reform of the membership, but if that is not possible, we prefer the

higher threshold provided by the Charter to obtain that result.

Finally, we have supported increased transparency in the relationships between the Council and other bodies of the system. However, Council reform cannot be limited to changing the number of members; it should also apply to their powers.

In considering the possibility of increasing the membership, we deem it important to bear in mind criteria such as representativity, greater diversity, the right of veto, and power differences between membership categories. When the Council was created, there were only 51 Member States and 11 Council members. Today there are 15 Council members, but 191 Member States. We therefore must enhance the Council's representativity by increasing the number of its members.

Throughout this process the criterion of effectiveness should be borne in mind. Increasing the possibility for countries to participate can be done through expansion and rotation combined, which would enable more countries to sit on the Council.

Finally, reducing the gap between the powers enjoyed by the two categories of members entails limiting the use of the veto, for example only to Chapter VII issues; using a qualified majority to overcome a veto; pinpointing areas in which two vetoes are required to prevail, and so on. These are some of the aspects that Chile has considered in terms of reforming the Security Council.

Mr. Chimphamba (Malawi): Mr. President, allow me to join others who have spoken before me in making a small contribution on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. At the same time, I would like to thank the Council for its very important report.

Under Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, Member States confer on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the functions of which fall mainly under two headings. These are the pacific settlement of disputes and action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression.

Although not all United Nations Member States sit on the Council — and, indeed, some have never been a member of the Council — its work is of specific national, regional and international interest and has far-reaching ramifications for all countries.

The Security Council contributes to the solution of conflicts and to the creation of conditions for sustainable peace, in particular through peacekeeping operations. Malawi, my own country, is proud and pleased to be a participant in such peacekeeping operations.

But, as the United Nations approaches its sixtieth anniversary, it must be recognized that the principles and norms of its Charter reflect the historical realities of a specific moment. The radically new nature of today's challenges and threats demands a decisive and comprehensive adjustment effort. The need for change is there, but Member States must consider carefully how to initiate such change and how to build consensus.

Today the United Nations is almost four times bigger than when it was created. It has now become truly global and universal in character. However, the current membership of the Security Council has come under scrutiny and has been criticized for not being sufficiently representative. The central institutional question is that its composition does not reflect the distribution of power on the international scene. Thus the majority of Member States believe that the legitimacy of the Security Council's decisions is weakened by such questionable representativity. There is a strong belief that the Security Council should be expanded to empower it to implement the principles governing human security in the field; otherwise, imposing sanctions might well harm the population in defence of which sanctions are undertaken.

In order to solve the question of equitable representation on the Security Council, the General Assembly established, as we all know, a Working Group to consider all aspects of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and improvements in its working methods.

Terrorism represents a new type of threat, as does the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the existence of States whose Governments are unable to exercise power over their territory and population in an effective way, often due to a lack of legitimacy. The effects of the globalization process reveal these threats clearly. Such threats demand a review of the functions of the Security Council, hence the need to reform it in

order to enable a wider participation of Member States through an increased membership.

Usually the Security Council acts when a crisis has already erupted. Consequently, its resolutions are of a punitive nature, instead of addressing long-term challenges in the areas of economic assistance, the promotion of human rights, good governance and debt reduction, with a view to consolidating the work of the Economic and Social Council. Malawi believes that the Security Council, as one of the principal organs of the United Nations, is long overdue for reform and expansion. In that respect, I support all the other Member States that have pleaded sincerely for an expansion of the Council and a change in its methods of work.

Mr. Own (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Let me take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to Mr. Julian Hunte, the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, for the able manner in which he guided the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters. We commend also the constructive efforts of his two Vice-Chairmen, the representatives of Liechtenstein and of Ecuador, to achieve progress in the process of comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

My delegation welcomes the joint debate by the General Assembly on the reports of the Security Council and of the Open-ended Working Group, respectively, which include reference to a number of measures to improve and reform the methods of work of the Security Council. However, the tireless efforts made are appreciated but they do not meet our expectations — and we insist on the fulfilment of our expectations. The report of the Security Council has only passing references to informal consultations. What we would like to emphasize is that the report should include a discussion of the real mechanism of the decision-making process, which occurs sometimes even before the Security Council begins discussing a matter. The consultations of the Council should, however, begin after open discussion, not the reverse.

The absolute majority of this Organization finds itself addressing matters that have been pre-decided, where Members are required merely to accept those decisions. The Security Council should promote relations with all States, particularly those States affected by the issue under consideration. It should also expand its cooperation with regional bodies and organizations in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter. Additionally, we support the proposal that the Council be required to have a comprehensive review of its work. It is important that the Council take the necessary steps to make all measures binding in positive response to the proposals of the Secretary-General aimed at improving its working methods.

It is very important for the Security Council to foster its relationships with the other main bodies of the United Nations. It should not limit the presentation of its annual report only to the General Assembly. Additionally, the Security Council should give the General Assembly a special report in accordance with Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter, so that the two bodies will work more closely, including on issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is very important to promote the relationship of the Security Council with the Economic and Social Council and with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by seeking the advisory opinions of the ICJ on matters under consideration.

The Council should approach its responsibilities with objectivity and neutrality and avoid double standards and selectivity. It should not follow the wishes of those who want to use it to serve their own purposes. If transparency and democracy are the criteria for determining the legitimacy of national Governments, then that standard should also be applied to all the bodies of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council. Closed meetings among a select few members of the Council and without the knowledge of the rest of its members is a practice that should be stopped completely. Silence vis-à-vis that practice implies tacit consent to the practice of one State, or a few States that are permanent members of the Security Council, dominating the process of decision-making in the Council. This increases public scepticism about the legitimacy of Security Council resolutions and raises questions as to whether or not this body really works for the international community.

The Security Council should be urged to approach its responsibilities in accordance with the Charter, especially regarding the equitable geographic

representation of its membership. Annex 4 includes some proposals by individual countries, as well as by regional groups such as the Non-Aligned Movement regarding expanding the membership of the Council. There should also be complete sovereign equality among all States as applied to the enlargement of the Security Council.

We would prefer that this enlargement be restricted to the non-permanent member category. We do not need more permanent members to continue to propagate distinctions of inequality among the Members of the United Nations.

We are against any proposal that is drafted in a discriminatory manner, such as one giving priority to those who would take up more responsibility for the budget of the Organization, or who have the capability of providing equipment and resources to peacekeeping forces. Such selectivity would have only one result — that of promoting the grip of the stronger and the richer countries on the Security Council at the expense of the smaller and poorer States, which constitute the majority of the Members of the United Nations.

It is very essential in the process of increasing the permanent membership of the Council to apply the principle of equitable geographic representation, taking into consideration the status of developing countries. Africa does not have a permanent seat on the Security Council, despite the fact that it represents a third of the Members of the Organization. This is an imbalance that should be corrected. We should accept Africa's legitimate demand in accordance with that continent's 1997 Harare Summit, which calls for two permanent seats on the Council to be held on a rotating basis according to criteria agreed by the African States.

The question of the veto privilege should be at the core of the reform of the Security Council. It is not an exaggeration to say that this is one of the more complicated and more controversial issues being debated — not just within the work of the Open-Ended Working Group, but since the founding of this Organization. The status quo in the Council is not compatible with the principle of sovereign equality among all States as established in the Charter. It contradicts the principle of justice, and undermines the principles of democracy. Many, including Libya, have said that the veto power is not used in the service of international peace and security, but rather in the service of protecting the national interests of those who have that privilege and of those allies that enjoy their protection and escape punishment and condemnation by them. Meanwhile, there are those who flagrantly challenge the power of the Security Council and reject the implementation of its resolutions before one and all.

This proves the importance of putting an end to the privilege of the veto power, or restricting its use to the greatest extent possible. My delegation supports all proposals along those lines. We would like to emphasize that the use of the veto should be subject to the ratification of at least two thirds of the Members of the General Assembly. All these measures are attempts to put an end to that privilege. We believe that the reform of the Security Council will be meaningless if this privilege is restricted to those who would use it for their own purposes.

We still insist and emphasize that any attempt to reform our Organization will not be successful or lead to positive results without comprehensive and integrated reform of the Security Council; and this will happen only with the cooperation of everyone. We hope that this spirit of cooperation will prevail in the work of the Open-Ended Working Group, so that it will succeed in reforming the Security Council in a manner that reflects the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations — by making the Council more representative in its membership, clearer in its work, and more democratic in its decision-making process.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): More than a decade ago, we, the Member States of the United Nations, started discussions to decide on ways and means that could improve the working methods of, and introduce reforms into, the functioning of the Security Council — a body which under the Charter is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. This imperative need proceeds both from changes in the international situation, and from our common resolve to meet the many important challenges we face.

The Republic of Guinea therefore appreciates the fact that this thematic debate is being held on questions relating to the Security Council and we welcome this new report, which covers its activities for the period of June 2003 to July 2004. This present report of the Security Council is very timely, since it has appeared on the eve of the sixtieth anniversary of our Organization at a time when the international

community is preparing to give new political impetus to the comprehensive reform process. My delegation notes that the resolutions and decisions that were adopted over the past 12 months have moved several peace processes in the world forward, thanks to the cooperation among regional and subregional stakeholders.

We are pleased to note that Africa, more than ever before, is central to the work of the Security Council. As the report states, the situation in West Africa has improved considerably. Central Africa seems to be stabilizing, thanks to the special attention given to the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to Burundi.

We are grateful to Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry of the United Kingdom for having introduced the report of the Council (S/2004/2). We would also like to thank all the other members of the Council and the support staff for the high quality of the document, as well as for the enormous sacrifices that they have made.

We acknowledge — on the basis of our consideration of the report — that the working methods of the Security Council have evolved significantly. There are now many open meetings of the Council — one of the concerns expressed by Member States in their desire for transparency in the work of the Council.

While the importance of private meetings — the basic goal of which is to better discuss substantive and often very sensitive issues — is clear, several delegations regret the way in which some decisions are taken. In fact, some decisions are the result of partisan interests, and that affects the way in which they are implemented on the ground. In view of that situation, my delegation firmly believes that new steps should be taken to strengthen transparency, justice and democratic methods in order to make the decisions of the Council more effective and to give them greater legitimacy. We encourage all Member States to continue the discussion about the reform of the Council and related issues so that we can put an end to the perception of the Security Council as a body whose functioning is opaque. Unfortunately that leads to great frustration, which could discredit the values embodied by the United Nations.

In that context, Africa adopted, in 1997, the Harare Declaration, which supported the principle of expanding the Security Council on the basis of equitable regional representation and called for five non-permanent and two permanent seats to be allocated to Africa.

We have taken note of the many suggestions made during the consultative process at the fifty-eighth session and throughout these discussions. My delegation believes that the ability of a Member State to meet its obligations in the area of peacekeeping — over and above financial considerations — depends primarily on real political will, which requires a resolute and constant commitment to the cause of peace, security and stability.

We appeal for an orderly debate that begins, first and foremost, with general acceptance of the principle of equitable geographical representation and then proceeds to agreement on objective criteria for selecting Council members, followed by a decision about how long they would serve and, finally, by agreement on conditions for the exercise of the veto. Finally, in order better to meet current challenges, Member States must overcome vested interests and make it possible to implement reform in a speedy manner in order to ensure a more representative, more effective Council.

My delegation is pleased about the cooperation that exists between the Security Council and the regional organizations, particularly the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union. Such complementarity of action certainly helps to guarantee international peace and security.

In conclusion, I should like to express the appreciation of the Government of Guinea for the Security Council's working visit to Conakry on 28 June 2004 during its mission to West Africa. We hope that the lessons learned will be instructive for future missions. Field visits, which can provide useful information should be included, and sufficient time provided so as to better assess a situation and ensure that the message sent is not incomplete.

Ms. Bahemuka (Kenya): I would like to begin by revisiting some obvious facts about the Security Council and its mandate. First, the Security Council was established in 1945 to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, particularly with regard to the maintenance of peace and security. The circumstances then prevailing were very different from those of today. Secondly, in 1965 — 20 years after the

establishment of the Council — it was deemed necessary to expand the Council to its current composition, following Assembly resolution 1991 (XVIII) of 1963, which recommended an increase in membership. Thirdly, in 1994 — 30 years after the only expansion of the Council — States Members of the United Nations agreed to the formation of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters, which, 10 years down the line — despite the impetus occasioned by changed circumstances — has yet to achieve concrete, tangible results.

The time has come for a realistic approach to be adopted in dealing with issues related to the reconfiguration of the Security Council so as to enable it to meet new and evolving global challenges. With the end of the cold war, it was expected that there would be less conflict. On the contrary, conflicts have increased and intensified. Furthermore, the theatre of current conflicts is completely different from the one that prevailed in 1945. Then, the world had just emerged from a large-scale war that pitted countries against one another. Currently, inter-State conflicts are minimal and have been replaced by a proliferation of intra-State conflicts that are small in scale but more devastating in nature.

In the past two decades, the Council's reaction to conflict flare-ups in various parts of the world has been slow. More often than not, the Council has stood by as the world has witnessed massive killings and untold human suffering, as in the case of Rwanda and Yugoslavia. At times, the Council has been reduced to the status of an observer with the less-than-honourable task of counting the dead before timidly taking action. The Charter refers to "prompt and effective action" in the maintenance of international peace and security. Unfortunately, that noble objective has yet to be achieved.

My delegation is endeavouring to envisage a Security Council that could forestall conflicts by effectively establishing a tangible early-warning mechanism — a system that would be dynamic and, at the same time, foolproof. It would be a Security Council equipped with the necessary wherewithal to forestall and neutralize situations before they erupt into humanitarian catastrophes. This can be made possible only by the institutionalization of a well-financed Council that is able to effectively mobilize resources from Member States. The Council should also work closely with regional security bodies to constantly monitor the complex and diverse root causes of conflict. The Council should be able to seek the concurrence of Member States for a waiver to institute pre-emptive action whenever situations threaten international peace.

As has been stated, global circumstances have changed. Threats to international peace and security have also evolved. International crime and drug syndicates, money-laundering, HIV/AIDS, unprecedented proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the danger posed by the possibility of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-State actors, are but a few of the novel threats that require innovative approaches. Kenya would like to see a Security Council that is proactive and that provides reports indicating how it intends to deal with these new threats, should they escalate to threaten world peace. This in itself would give the world reassurance and a sense of security. The routine annual and special reports of the Council do not adequately fulfil this need.

The Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council was established with a view to addressing disparities that exist within the Council. Progress was achieved during the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, during which, as in previous sessions, the Working Group reached provisional agreement on a large number of issues, although a divergence of views remained on others. The majority of opinions expressed over the 10-year period have indicated the need for expansion. However, care should be taken to avoid expansion for the sake of expansion. Much thought should be put into how an expanded Security Council could most effectively and efficiently face the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

Somalia has been without a Government for over 14 years. Within the framework of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Kenya has been chairing the Somali reconciliation process. We are delighted to note that on 10 October 2004 — just two days ago — Somali delegates to the peace process elected their President, Mr. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, who will be inaugurated in Nairobi on 14 October 2004. We congratulate the brave Somali

people and cali upon the Security Council to move quickly to support Somalia in the next phase in the peace process. This will entail disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating the militia to ensure peace and security in Somalia and the region at large. We would also like to urge the international community to support and recognize the new Government so as to give it the legitimacy it rightly deserves.

With regard to the expansion of the Security Council, African heads of State and Government, through the Organization of African Unity Harare Declaration of 1997, requested two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats on the Council. This position has not changed. Kenya supports the position of the African Union and requests other States to respect positions taken by regional bodies.

In conclusion, allow me to state that my delegation favours finalizing the work of the Working Group and acting on the sentiments expressed by the majority of Members. Kenya appreciates the difficult circumstances under which the Security Council performs its duties and lauds the Council for the achievements it has made over the years. We commend the positive interactions and relations that have emerged between the Security Council and the General Assembly. We believe, however, that a more transparent, accountable and democratized Security Council with a universal approach to issues of international peace and security would be more effective, despite the prevailing circumstances. My delegation hopes that after the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change is discussed, Member States will rise up and have the courage to positively transform the Security Council, especially as we look forward to commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.

United Nations A/59/PV.28

General Assembly

Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

28th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 13 October 2004, 11.30 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 11.30 a.m.

Agenda items 11 and 53 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/59/2)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): It is a pleasure for my delegation to welcome the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, contained in document A/59/2, which provides a brief overview of the Council's activities in the past year in the area of international peace and security.

This meeting is always a good opportunity for Member States to review the work of the Council, an assignment that we gladly look forward to. We therefore thank the Council members for the report.

May I also welcome the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council. I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, His Excellency Mr. Julian Hunte, for his active role as Chair of the Working Group and for his determined efforts to win common agreement on these issues.

We live in a constantly changing international political climate that challenges and tests the strength of our Organization. Over the past year, old threats and new challenges have continued to grip many parts of the world, directly affecting many of our Member States. In this regard, my delegation would like to comment on some of the important issues contained in the report that have had such an impact.

Despite the fact that the Council has regularly considered the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, the situation on the ground has not improved and, in fact, has worsened. The implementation of the road map that envisions a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is far from becoming a reality. My delegation still considers the road map as the feasible option, as long as the relevant parties, particularly the Israeli side, show genuine willingness to implement the plan.

Regrettably, for the better part of the history of the issue of Palestine, the Council has been prevented from adopting a just and balanced approach to the matter. If permitted to do so, the Council could persuade Israel to withdraw its forces from the occupied territories and to cease settlement activities, in accordance with the relevant Council resolutions. This is a critically important issue that could jeopardize the credibility of the Council should it fail to ensure the implementation of its own resolutions.

Concerning other events in the region, the Iraqi issue has been dominating the work of the Council during the past year. In that regard, my delegation

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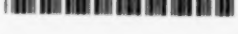

welcomed the adoption of resolution 1546 (2004) on Iraq that has returned sovereignty to the people of Iraq. Unfortunately, peace, security and stability remain major concerns there; increased violence has further deprived ordinary Iraqis of a stable and peaceful environment in which to live.

Indonesia reiterates its call for the United Nations to play a leading role, particularly in establishing appropriate conditions on the ground in Iraq in preparation for elections scheduled for January 2005. There is no question that the United Nations has the best credentials to assume this role to enable Member States to participate in post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction efforts in Iraq. It is our strong hope that the Council will be able to find innovative ways of achieving those objectives.

To create conditions for peace elsewhere, the Security Council has collaborated with regional organizations in pursuit of that multifaceted goal. We commend the Council for this form of collaboration. In many instances, these partnerships have proven fruitful in building and maintaining peace because of the intimate knowledge the organizations have of regional conflicts and their willingness to commit resources to solve the conflicts efficiently. In order to make this endeavour a success, adequate resources and funding need to be allocated at all times. It is my delegation's belief that this practice should be further enhanced and more clearly defined, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter that deals with such interaction.

In spite of known limitations, the value of these evolving partnerships is clearly demonstrated in Africa, where the Security Council has enlisted the support of the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union to help resolve several disputes. For instance, the African Union is playing a key role in mediating the crisis in Darfur, the Sudan. Also, the application of the African Union-supported Joint Verification Mechanism to the situation in the Congo has also yielded positive results and should lead to a peaceful resolution of that crisis. Moreover, the Council has received recommendations from the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa to help resolve conflict situations in that subregion.

While commending the work of the Council in combating terrorism, we wish to emphasize that cooperation among Member countries to deal with this global threat is of paramount importance. On efforts to curb the spread of weapons of mass destruction, permit me to express Indonesia's concern over actions with law-making implications that have been taken by the Security Council to achieve the goals of non-proliferation and to counter terrorism. Despite our concern about the liberal application of its powers under Chapter VII of the Charter in this regard, Indonesia is fully committed to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

Indonesia is also of the opinion that a strong and active relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly is essential to the effectiveness of the United Nations. For this to succeed, there are steps that need to be taken.

First of all, the interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council must, in the interest of all Member States, be governed by transparency. Towards that end, there must be increased dialogue and exchange of information between both bodies, with the Council taking the wishes of the Assembly into consideration in its decision-making process. This is critical, because the Assembly is an integral part of the system of collective security established by the Charter. One way in which the Council can keep a finger on the pulse of the Assembly is by convening more formal meetings on the issues before it, thereby hearing the views of interested parties before it makes decisions or adopts resolutions.

Secondly, the Council should accept, as an article of faith, the necessity of regularly informing Member States of the nature and scope of its activities and deliberations. Towards further enriching its work, the Council must also provide the opportunity and means for concerned Member States to communicate their views to it. An important tool in that regard is institutionalized consultations between the Presidents of the Assembly and the Council.

Thirdly, about three years ago, the Council began a series of month-end wrap-up sessions, reviewing the work it had done during that period with non-members of the Council. Those sessions were widely hailed throughout the Organization because of their great usefulness. Unfortunately, for nearly two years now, the wrap-up sessions have not been held. In our view, such an important vehicle of communication between the general membership and the Council — one in

which the outgoing presidency directly accounts to Member States — should be resumed.

My delegation would like to point out that it is of the greatest importance for the Charter-mandated responsibilities of organs of the United Nations to be maintained and respected, guaranteeing that the checks and balances of the Charter are not trampled upon.

Indonesia reiterates its position that only a transparent, democratic and representative Security Council, whose membership and practices reflect twenty-first century realities, will be capable of guaranteeing the maintenance of international peace and security, as stipulated by the United Nations Charter. We are strongly convinced that reform in that body is required in order to bolster the legitimacy and credibility of its decision-making processes.

We have to recognize that reform of the Security Council remains a key issue. While support for the enlargement of the membership of the Council is widespread, there has been no consensus on how to go about that reform. For 10 years, the Open-ended Working Group has sought to resolve the issue, but the prospect remains uncertain.

In principle, reform of the Security Council should be conducted comprehensively and reflect today's geopolitical realities. Though my Government advocates and supports the enlargement of the Security Council, it believes that its existing structure, combining permanent membership with non-permanent membership, should be retained, not set aside.

In that regard, the presence of Indonesia, as the world's largest moderate Muslim nation, should prove beneficial to the deliberations of the Council. Its practice of pluralistic democracy, its experience in mediating conflicts and its vast contribution to various peacekeeping operations — whether in Cambodia, the southern Philippines, the Congo, Sierra Leone, Liberia or Georgia — and its abiding commitment to international peace and understanding qualify it to assume such a role.

Finally, we also look forward to receiving inputs from the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. However, reform of the United Nations should not only be conducted in the context of Security Council; it must impact the entire United Nations system, as stipulated by the 2000 Millennium Declaration.

Mr. Danesh-Yazdi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I wish to join previous speakers in expressing my appreciation to the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, for introducing the annual report of the Council to the current session of the General Assembly.

The report is indicative of the Security Council's performance and approach to issues of high significance and sensitivity that impact international peace and security. It not only provides an opportunity for the general membership to get better acquainted with the work of the Council, but also helps to maintain and improve the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, as suggested by the Charter. That relationship cannot remain healthy unless the views and concerns of the entire membership are duly noted and respected by the Council in discharging its important responsibilities.

The report of the Council deserves to be given careful and due consideration in terms of both its format and content. On the format, the present report has been prepared in a concise, better focused and improved manner, which in our view could be seen as an indication of the Council's willingness to streamline and improve its method of work. We also note that, in dealing with a wide range of issues, the Security Council had an intense pace of activities during the past 12 months.

In the meantime, a significant number of measures were taken to improve transparency and openness in the work of the Council. They include the improvement of the format of the Council's annual report; holding more open meetings and open debates, as well as briefings for non-member States; and consultations with regional groups. Undoubtedly, those are few but the right steps to bring about a positive impact on the work of the Council and its relationship with the wider United Nations membership. Indeed, a closer link between the Council and the general membership is imperative to enable the United Nations to address effectively the issues and crises that adversely impact international peace and security.

The positive trends in the working methods of the Security Council should not be restricted to certain areas. Transparency, openness and consistency are key elements that the Security Council should observe in all its activities and approaches. Sadly, the Council has appeared to neglect those important factors on

numerous occasions. In that respect, reference may be made to such instances as the surprise scheduling of open debates with selective notification, reluctance to convene open debates on some issues of high significance, restricting participation in some of the open debates, and discriminating between members and non-members of the Council as far as the sequence and time limits of statements during open debates are concerned.

A disturbing fact is the Council's attempt to gradually encroach on the powers and mandate of the General Assembly by addressing some issues, including through thematic debates, which traditionally fall within the competence of the General Assembly or even the Economic and Social Council, or its attempts to enter the areas of standard-setting and establishing definitions that fall within the legislative and standard-setting purview of the General Assembly. Furthermore, in recent years, we have witnessed an increase in the number of subsidiary organs of the Security Council. It is therefore imperative that those subsidiary organs of the Council work in a way in which the general membership of the United Nations can receive adequate information on their role and functions.

To further increase the transparency of its work and improve its working methods, the Council should seriously take into consideration the relevant provisions of the Charter and the resolutions that clarify its relationship with the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations, especially resolution 58/126. Accordingly, rule 48 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, which calls for the Council's meetings to be held in public, should be thoroughly observed; consequently, the closed meetings and informal consultations should be kept to a minimum, as the exceptions they were meant to be.

The prevailing state of affairs in international relations points to formidable challenges that we all face. This situation has prompted the Council to resort quite often to Chapter VII of the Charter to deal with certain incidents. However, a careful review of that trend reminds us that the Council could have opted for alternative provisions to respond more appropriately to particular cases. We therefore share the view that the Security Council, instead of resorting to excessive use of Chapter VII, should develop a mechanism to determine how the provisions of Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter can be fully utilized for the pacific settlement of disputes and what role the Security Council, the Secretary-General and other United Nations entities, as well as regional arrangements, can play in resolving disputes and conflicts through peaceful means.

From the substantive point of view, the report covers a wide range of issues that were dealt with by the Council during the period under consideration. I will, however, confine my statement to a number of issues that are of great importance and sensitivity to my country.

Over the past 12 months, the situation in Iraq has dominated all regional and international developments and, accordingly, has featured prominently on the agenda of the Security Council. The adoption of five resolutions on the subject by the Council during that period is a clear indication of its determination to address the question of Iraq. We welcome further United Nations involvement in Iraq and the enhancement of the pivotal role that this world body can and should play in that country. We view the Security Council's resolutions as forming a solid basis for enabling Iraq to regain its full sovereignty and preserve its unity, political independence and territorial integrity, particularly through the holding free and fair elections, as scheduled, and the speedy withdrawal of foreign forces from the country.

In Iran's view, the United Nations in general and the Security Council in particular must redouble their efforts and play a more proactive role in helping the Iraqi people, at this crucial juncture, to move smoothly through the difficult process under way with a view to ending their suffering.

We note that the situation in Afghanistan also continued to be regularly considered by the Council throughout the period under review. The Council's initiative to send a mission to Afghanistan was a positive step in the right direction. We share the observations made by the Council mission that the peace process and the political process in Afghanistan need to be supported by the international community in order for security and stability to be restored there.

The Council's decision to extend the mandates of the international and United Nations missions in Afghanistan in order to help the Afghan authorities to secure a healthy environment for free, fair and credible elections was praiseworthy. The recent massive turnout of the Afghan nation for the presidential election was a positive and welcome event which well illustrates that

the Afghans are willing and able to take their destiny in their own hands. It certainly marks the beginning of a new era in the history of Afghanistan. Iran welcomes that development. We will spare no effort to help the elected Government in Kabul to overcome the challenges that the Afghan people face. We also believe that the United Nations has a huge responsibility to play a more effective role in helping the Afghan authorities to restore security and stability and to rebuild the country.

The situation in the Middle East, especially the Palestinian question, received the attention of the Council throughout the period under consideration. We note that the Council continued to convene monthly meetings at which members received briefings from the Secretary-General, his Personal Representative and Special Coordinator or other high-ranking Secretariat officials on the situation in the Middle East. That undoubtedly helped Council members not to lose sight of the grave situation in that region. However, we are of the view that the Council was rendered ineffective and unable to address adequately the question of Palestine, despite the gravity of that issue.

We observed with dismay that, during the period under review, attempts to adopt resolutions on the Palestinian issue in the Security Council were thwarted three times, even though earlier relevant resolutions of the Council were totally disregarded by Israel. In fact, the Council's approach on the Palestinian issue fell well short of our expectations. No doubt the credibility of the Council will erode over time if it is habitually seen to be unable to meet its responsibilities with regard to outstanding issues on its agenda.

Allow me now to briefly touch upon the important issue of the reform of the Security Council. The membership of the United Nations has increased from 112 in 1963, when the Council was last enlarged, to 191 today. Indeed, the composition of the Security Council must be changed, principally to reflect the increased membership of the countries of the world, particularly of developing countries. Almost 11 years have passed since the Working Group on the reform of the Security Council began its deliberations on the issue. We note with appreciation the efforts made by the Working Group, especially the important initiative of the Chairman, to stimulate an active discussion on substantive topics relating to the comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

However, the debate that took place during the course of the previous session of the Working Group has proved that despite some limited success in the area of work methods, significant progress has yet to be made on substantive matters, such as the size and composition of the Council and the veto power.

Clearly, the impasse that is hindering the evolution of the reform is the result of the complex nature and the enormous importance of the issue. Despite the lack of progress on the main issues, we still believe that the process of the reform of the Council should not be subject to any predetermined or superficial timetable, since any hasty decision would run the risk of harming this very delicate process, which is of vital importance for and of great interest to the entire membership of the United Nations. Because of the fact that the reform of the Council will have a far-reaching impact for the whole world, every effort should be made to reach the broadest possible agreement among Member States.

As to the objectives of the reform of the Council, we continue to believe that the Council, as the body primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, must become more democratic, more representative, more accountable and more effective, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

There are a number of options available to make that a reality. Two approaches seem to enjoy the greatest support among Member States. The first relates to the ways and means of improving the working procedure of the Security Council, and the second, to agreement on increasing the non-permanent membership of the Council, pending general agreement on the issue of increasing the number of permanent seats.

Under such circumstances — with developing countries being more fairly represented on the Security Council and the question of the representation by more than 1 billion Muslims being adequately addressed — the democratization of the Security Council would gain pace and, hopefully, lead to a genuine reconsideration of the most undemocratic practice in the Council, that is, the use of the veto. In that regard, the opinion of the vast majority of the States Members of the United Nations, who continue to consider the use of veto to be a discriminatory and undemocratic instrument in the

decision-making process of the Council, should be heeded.

The general support for limiting and curtailing the use of the veto with a view to its eventual elimination needs to be explicitly reflected in the final outcome of the Working Group on the reform of the Security Council and, hopefully, in the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

I would like to close by assuring you, Mr. President, of our full cooperation on the important issue of the reform of the Security Council. We are confident that, under your skilled and able stewardship, the Open-ended Working Group on Council reform will function successfully and will have a fruitful outcome.

Mr. Mavroyiannis (Cyprus): I would like, first, to thank the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, for having introduced the report before us.

We have been considering the issue of United Nations reform for years, and we have now reached the point at which we have to contemplate the new face of the United Nations in the twenty-first century. The report of the High-level Panel, expected in less than two months, must fully take into account the views and ideas of all and allow for a far-reaching approach that will yield the desired results. I believe that the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly must be viewed mainly from that perspective.

In that context, the report we have before us, however informative, nevertheless creates a feeling of uneasiness. The functioning of the United Nations system is not satisfactory, and the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council is not what it should be. The shift of attention from the Assembly to the Council is a symptom rather than a remedy. That shift could, in fact, be the last line of defence against the erosion suffered by the United Nations system in recent years and which has been gradually dethroning the Organization as the primary instrument of contemporary international relations.

As we try to work towards effective multilateralism that revolves around the United Nations, it is of primary importance to restore, or to construct, a truly interactive dialogue between the two main political organs of the Organization. Further transparency and accountability are also required. Those attributes are even more crucial at a time when, beyond any differences of opinion on functions and competences, we all realize the need for an integrated approach and for interdependence between the issues dealt with by the General Assembly and those addressed by the Security Council.

I would also like to succinctly describe our own contribution to the discussions aimed at reform of the Security Council, which is the most important instrument at our disposal in the United Nations system, entrusted with the primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. In the process of the ongoing deliberations, we must consistently take into account that the outcome of such reform will indicate the level of the Security Council's effectiveness and, concurrently, the level of its ability to execute its functions and powers, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

As a small State whose primary source of protection is the rule of law and strict adherence to international legality, Cyprus has always maintained that the credibility and legitimacy of the Council must be ensured, first, through broader and more equitable representation of Member States in its composition; secondly, by taking into account the realities and the criteria embodied in Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Charter; and thirdly, through securing efficiency, both in the work of the Council and in the implementation of its resolutions.

We are supportive of a contemporary Security Council whose structure will adequately reflect the tremendous change in the global political reality since the inception of the Organization and whose composition will comprise a more balanced representation of all geographical groups. To that end, we look forward to the report of the High-level Panel and to the recommendations of the Secretary-General, and we anticipate that Member States will rise to the occasion and seize the opportunity to pursue a strong follow-up.

It must also be underlined that the concept of security today is a multifaceted one and that it no longer pertains only to traditional threats. It is therefore imperative that we adopt an all-inclusive approach with the broadest possible perspective in order to combat security deficits, regardless of their nature.

We also believe that we should do more to involve troop-contributing countries in the deliberations and that all major stakeholders must have ample possibilities to adequately make their views known, thus adding value to the decisions of the Council. Simultaneously, one should bear in mind, first, that the spirit and practice of effective multilateralism must respect and uphold international legality and protect individual and collective human rights; and secondly, that such multilateralism not only encompasses, but also derives from, the comprehension and consideration of local realities and particulars, on the basis of which it must then proceed to formulate proposals.

Cyprus believes that the effort under way to reform the Security Council must be comprehensive and far-sighted. In the spirit of those principles and with the aim of reinforcing the legitimacy and efficacy of the Council, we are supportive of increasing both its permanent and its non-permanent membership. In that respect, we believe that the joint French-German position on expansion of the Council could provide a basis for meeting those requirements that will enable it to fulfil its role in the maintenance of international peace and security, always having as a priority the best interests of the peoples whose security the Council is mandated to safeguard.

Mr. Clodumar (Nauru): The delegation of Nauru joins previous speakers in congratulating Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry of the United Kingdom, President of the Security Council, on his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council (A/59/2). My delegation also takes this opportunity to thank the former President of the General Assembly, The Honourable Julian Hunte, Foreign Minister of Saint Lucia, and Ambassadors Luis Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador and Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein for their good work in revamping our debate in the Open-ended Working Group by focusing on the key elements in reform of the Security Council.

The Security Council, as noted in the report, has been seized with a wide range of issues, from civil conflicts in the African region to the consolidation of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region — particularly in our neighbourhood — to the revitalization of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the strengthening of action against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction through the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). We are pleased to note the Council's action in extending the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor to 20 May 2005 and the United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville to 31 December 2004. Those two Missions have been success stories for the Council and for the United Nations as a whole, and it would be a great pity if the decision to end those two operations were premised on saving money when millions of dollars continue to be poured into other conflict regions. The premature termination of missions before real peace and economic development has taken root could lead and has led to breakdowns in the peace process, as we have seen recently in Côte d'Ivoire and Haiti.

The failure of Israel and Palestine to come to the peace table by way of fulfilling their obligations under the road map, in cooperation with the Quartet, has continued to bring senseless misery to their peoples. In our view, the failure of the Security Council to adopt resolutions to address breaches of international law and of the Council's own resolutions has exacerbated the situation, as a divided Council is powerless. That situation should be corrected, as it could and would send a signal to the parties to the conflict that their actions and counter-actions are being condoned.

Iraq and Afghanistan have featured prominently in the Council's work over the past 12 months. The paths that brought them to the refuge of the Council were different, and that is being reflected in the manner in which peace and security and democracy are being achieved in those two countries.

Nauru is pleased to see the Council reaffirm its support on the solution to the question on the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara by resolution 1541 (2004). However, it should do more to bring the process to closure so that the people of Western Sahara can enjoy freedom and economic and social development through the right to their resources and land.

Nauru has submitted two reports to the Counter-Terrorism Committee but is late in submitting the third report. The main reason for that is the lack of capacity in our country to generate the necessary legislation and other actions required under Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). The requirements under resolution 1540 (2004) have made the work more arduous. To that end, the question of joint reporting by the Pacific Island countries through our regional Forum

is being evaluated, and it is our sincere hope that the proposal will be entertained by the Council when it is formally brought to it for consideration.

Under the 2000 Biketawa Declaration, the Pacific Island Forum has made significant efforts in enhancing peace and security in the region among which the most noteworthy is the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). The Forum is currently evaluating what assistance it could offer Nauru to ensure that the current economic and social situation does not give rise to instability and security problems. We believe that the United Nations and the Council should look at that model as another way to support the Council in maintaining peace and security in conflict regions.

Reforming the Security Council has been a fundamental part of United Nations politics for decades. While we all agree on the idea of increasing the membership of the Council in order better to reflect the membership of our Organization, so far, the only consensus among us on this issue is that the process will be arduous because of the different approaches that delegations have. Despite the complexities of this issue, we have seen, through our work on cluster II, that good progress has already been made towards making the work of the Security Council more transparent.

We recognize the inextricable linkage between the question of the veto and the question of Security Council expansion. However, we believe that the signal we have from the permanent members of the Council, whose support is essential, is that they could entertain the question of expanding the membership of both categories, but we have not heard anything positive — or anything at all — about fiddling with the veto power. Therefore, to us this is a no-go zone, and to insist on dealing with this issue in conjunction with the expansion suggests ulterior motives. Despite the major obstacles before us, work should continue in developing a good framework for the reform process to move forward.

On the issue of the expansion of the Council's membership, my delegation reaffirms its support for the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent categories of the Council. My delegation believes that countries that are willing and able to make a meaningful and effective contribution to maintaining world peace should be considered for permanent membership. To that end my delegation supports the aspirations of Germany, Japan and India for permanent membership.

Finally, our effort on the question of Security Council reform is going to be complemented and, hopefully, reinforced by the work being undertaken by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. The report of the Panel will be submitted by the Secretary-General at the end of this year, and we look forward to participating in the deliberations on the report.

Mr. Goonatilleke (Sri Lanka): Over the years, the Open-ended Working Group has considered various issues involving the reform of the Security Council. Among those issues are size, the question of geographical representation, criteria for membership, the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, accountability and the use of the veto by permanent members of the Council. We welcome the progress made so far by the Working Group and its report to the General Assembly.

The negotiations that began a decade ago have made it possible for the Working Group to gather considerable amount of information on the rationalization to be undertaken. During the course of its work, various formulas have been presented by interested delegations and groups to the Working Group. However, despite the initiative taken by the Chairman to stimulate discussion during the fifty-eighth session, thus far no finality has been reached on any of the issues. Consequently, the Working Group will have to continue its deliberations well into the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

During this year's general debate, more than 140 Member States focused on specific areas of Security Council reform, including its ideal size, the question of regional representation and related matters. In considering the size of the Council, we must take into account the current membership of the United Nations in comparison to the 112 members that comprised the Organization in 1963, when the Council was enlarged to 15 members.

Bearing in mind the crucial role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as the binding nature of its resolutions, it is widely accepted that the Council should be expanded to represent the geopolitical realities of the day, and not those that existed some 60 years ago.

In that regard, much has been said about the efficiency and the effectiveness of an expanded Council. While there is reason to accept that the Council should not be expanded to the extent that it becomes unwieldy, we have to admit that efficiency and effectiveness of the Council cannot be ensured by limiting its size while ignoring the reality on the ground. Those and other concerns should be addressed by introducing measures to improve the working methods of the Council.

My delegation agrees that the expansion should reflect the principle of equitable geographical distribution. Among other issues, due consideration should be given to the Council's lack of representation of developing countries, which represent the vast majority of the United Nations membership. Sri Lanka shares the view expressed by many delegations at the current session that the expansion of the Council should be in respect of both the permanent and the non-permanent categories and that this exercise should be undertaken in such a manner that it makes the Council truly representative of the membership of the United Nations.

In that regard, I would like to quote from the statement made at the Assembly's 3rd meeting on 21 September, by Her Excellency Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, President of Sri Lanka, regarding the expression of interest by Brazil, Germany, India and Japan in permanent membership on an expanded Security Council:

> "Sri Lanka supports their candidatures, as they comply with the objective criteria applicable to the expansion of the permanent membership of the Security Council. Sri Lanka would also wish to see a consensus emerge on the permanent representation of Africa in the Security Council. Africa must be included in a final determination on the future composition of the Security Council. It is hoped that the Open-ended Working Group will continue to exert efforts to resolve all outstanding issues expeditiously."

From the point of view of the great majority of the membership, among the issues the Working Group needs to address is the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Given the importance of the responsibilities entrusted to the Security Council by the United Nations Charter and the limited membership of the Council in relation to that of the United Nations, it is evident that there should be a closer working relationship between the two branches of the Organization. It has been argued that, by paragraph 1 of Article 24, Member States have conferred on the Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and that the Council acts on behalf of the entire membership of the Organization. It is in that context that most delegations have urged that that relationship should be enhanced and that the Council should increase the accountability and transparency of its work.

We fully understand the difficulty of resolving these issues, taking into consideration the numerous views and proposals that have been presented to the Working Group. On the basis of the interest displayed by members in resolving the issue of expansion, the Working Group has to decide whether issues should be addressed in a piecemeal fashion or if it should come up with comprehensive proposals involving all issues under discussion.

As we are aware, the Working Group has been labouring to fulfil its mandate for over a decade. Given the length of time we have been involved in this exercise and the urgency of reaching final decisions, it is important for the Working Group to present a comprehensive set of recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly. Moreover, we believe that the Working Group should decide on a time frame within which it would submit its recommendations.

Finally, a large number of those delegations that took the floor during the general debate last month also referred to the work currently undertaken by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, appointed by the Secretary-General, whose report is to be issued in December. My delegation hopes that the report will also give new momentum to the work undertaken by the Working Group in regard to reforming the Security Council. At the same time, Sri Lanka expects that sufficient time and opportunity will be available to the Member States to carefully study, discuss and reach conclusions prior to deciding on the implementation of the recommendations of the Panel.

Mr. Sopoaga (Tuvalu): On behalf of the delegation of Tuvalu, I would like first to thank the Security Council and the Secretariat for the work they have done to prepare the report before us. Tuvalu also

appreciates the work of the Security Council in its endeavours to maintain to international peace and security over the past years. We acknowledge in particular the support of the Security Council in efforts to restore peace to, among others, the people of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, in the Pacific region.

Despite our being new to the United Nations, we observe with great anxiety the growing challenges and threats confronting the security environment. The international fight against terrorism and alleged weapons of mass destruction, the consequences of wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq, and civil unrest in the Middle East and parts of Africa clearly underscore the complex nature of the work of the Security Council. They also clearly underscore the urgent need for appropriate reforms to be made in the United Nations to ensure a more efficient and responsive Security Council.

Tuvalu therefore welcomes the ongoing efforts to reform the Security Council, as highlighted in the report before us. The efforts of the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, Mr. Julian Hunte, to revitalize the work of the Open-ended Working Group established to consider aspects of Security Council reform are commendable. However, we feel that those efforts will be in vain unless the Open-ended Working Group is properly enabled to complete its task as required.

Tuvalu supports the importance of wider consultations on security issues through relevant avenues, particularly through opportunities for public debate in the Security Council and the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. The reporting requirements of the latter, however, should be accompanied by assistance, in the form of national and regional measures, especially to countries with the least capacity to cope with such requirements, such as Tuvalu.

For Tuvalu and many small island developing States, security should be seen in its multidimensional nature. Our national security is threatened by environmental degradation emanating from outside the country. Here I refer specifically to the environmental impact of climate change and sea-level rise and to the loss of biological diversity. The impact of climate change has the potential to threaten the survival of our entire nation. As a result, we firmly believe — and I am sure that many vulnerable island developing countries share my sentiments — that those environmental concerns should be part of the reform agenda of the Security Council. This, in essence, is widely accepted, including in the Millennium Summit Declaration and elsewhere in the context of the United Nations. It therefore warrants intensifying the efforts of all Member States to achieve comprehensive reform in the Security Council. Indeed, in view of Tuvalu's unique, extreme vulnerability — which it shares with many small island developing States — to external forces including terrorism and environmental degradation, we fully support that view.

As stated by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu during the general debate this year, it is our strong belief that, to maintain its legitimacy and relevance to all, the United Nations needs to reassess its role and its functions so as to better reflect the reality of today's world to ensure equitable participation and representation in its main bodies.

It must be emphasized that the primary role and responsibility of the Security Council with respect to the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security is crucial to everyone. To weak and vulnerable Member States such as Tuvalu, it is critical to ensuring their very survival.

In that respect, the issue of enlarging the membership of the Council is a vital one. Given that the United Nations now has 191 Members and that the membership of the Security Council has increased only once, in 1965, from 11 to 15, Tuvalu shares the view that the restructuring of the Security Council should first and foremost address the issue of membership in the Council, consistent with the principles of democracy and transparency, and also to bring about equitable representation of all regions on the globe, particularly the developing countries and small island developing States, in this vital organ of the United Nations.

In that vein, Tuvalu supports an increase in the number of both permanent and non-permanent seats in the Security Council. We believe Japan deserves a permanent seat, in view of its substantial contribution to international development, peace and security. We also believe that Germany, India and Brazil are also very appropriate candidates, for similar reasons.

Finally, but most importantly, we firmly believe that, in view of their extreme vulnerability to external forces — as recognized, as a special case, at the Rio

Summit and in all other international development agreements — small island developing States should also be considered for permanent representation in the Security Council. That would make the Security Council and the United Nations truly universal and democratic.

Ms. Pęksa-Krawiec (Poland): As has been stated by many previous speakers, we all await the results of the deliberations of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. We hope that the Panel's recommendations will give us new impetus to look from a different perspective at the possible ways the international community should answer the new threats and challenges.

Poland, as one of the main proponents of the idea of establishing the Panel, definitely has great expectations as to the results of its works. At the same time, however, we are realists and we know that the Panel cannot find the cure to everything or present us with detailed solutions in every aspect of reform. Therefore, in assisting the Panel, each of us should continue searching for ways to improve the work of the United Nations system in order to make it more reliable and effective. We all have responsibilities in that regard and we cannot believe that maintaining the status quo for another 10 years, just because we are afraid to fail, is really the best way to proceed.

In the Polish view, it is the word "responsibility" that should guide our deliberations on the needed changes in the United Nations system, including those of the Security Council. Since the performance of the Council is central to the effectiveness of the United Nations, both the Council's members and the entire United Nations membership have the responsibility to strengthen its role and legitimacy.

I thank Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry of the United Kingdom, the President of the Security Council, for his presentation of the Council's annual report. Let me just mention three aspects in that regard: the obligations of the Council in the process of making and executing decisions; the responsibilities of Council members; and the responsibilities of the whole membership regarding the reform of the Organization.

During the general debate, Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz, elaborating on the Polish initiative of adopting a new political act for the United Nations, stated that the gap between the mandating and the implementing functions of the United Nations is too wide.

Therefore, we believe that it is the responsibility of the members of the Security Council to take the lead in providing political and material support for the implementation of the Security Council's decisions. The credibility of the Council can be ensured only when its decisions are taken in a transparent way, with the involvement of the broader membership. The complexity of the new threats and challenges to international security makes it necessary to establish better coordination between the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, both in the day-to-day work of those organs and in longer-term planning.

The leading role of the Council should also be seen in the process of promoting closer cooperation with the troop-contributing countries. The established mechanisms of consultation still need improvement, especially when it comes to substance. The troop-contributing countries should be given more influence in the process of the creation of missions and in the elaboration of their mandates. They should also be better involved in the assessment of ongoing operations and the situation on the ground and in ways to improve it.

A new mechanism for discussions with groups of interested States or actors concerning any given crisis situation should also be taken into consideration. While preserving the rule of transparency, such meetings of the Council should have a rather informal format to allow partners honestly and in depth to assess problems and to elaborate ways to deal with them. While open debates of the Council are still needed and certainly have great value, informal meetings could help to resolve problems and in deciding about the needed tools.

Cooperation with regional organizations, especially those involved in the implementation of Council resolutions, is yet another tool that needs to be further enhanced. As in the case of the secretariats of those organizations and the United Nations Secretariat, there is a also vital need in the Council to establish genuine working, problem-oriented relations with other institutions that would complement the formal exchanges of letters and structured debates.

As to decision-making, the most discussed problem is still the question of the veto power. We are

not calling for that prerogative of the permanent members to be abandoned at this moment, but we are of the opinion that it has to be used in a responsible way and only when there is a need to protect international law, the principles of the Charter or the wider United Nations membership, but not the particular interests of countries.

As to the second aspect, the Republic of Poland believes that Security Council reform should be built on the assumption that being a member not only grants additional privileges, but also increases responsibilities. Therefore, while discussing the issue of the expansion of Security Council membership, we have to remember that the key to a more effective and legitimate Security Council does not lie in the number of its members, but rather in their qualities and their true resolve to act in the common interest.

Poland's position on the question of Council enlargement remains the same. We are of the opinion that an enlarged United Nations needs a bigger, more representative and democratic Security Council. Therefore, we support changes in both categories of membership. We recognize the readiness of two countries, Germany and Japan, to contribute on a larger scale to peace and security and to take upon themselves the responsibilities of the permanent members of the Council. We also share the opinion that other major contributors from Asia, Africa and South America should find permanent seats in the Council.

At the same time, the group of non-permanent members should be enlarged in a way that will reflect the changes in the regional groups. In that context, let me recall the justified position of the Eastern European Group to be better represented in the Council. The Eastern European Group has more then doubled its membership since it was created. The unique history of its members; their recent experience dealing with many kinds of conflicts and overcoming various threats; and the Group's growing role in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and, recently, development assistance give it not only the right to be better represented, but also the obligation to use its experience in the work of the Security Council.

Let me conclude with my third remark. The number of delegations that have decided to speak on this agenda item illustrates how important the issue of Security Council reform is to the Members of the United Nations. We all recognize that, like the United Nations as a whole, the Council has to change and adapt to be better able to face contemporary challenges. But we have to treat the reform of the Council with responsibility, not emotion. We have to address the subject as just one of the elements of the comprehensive adaptation of the United Nations system to the current international environment. We cannot allow ourselves to make that long-awaited adaptation and change to become a hostage to particular interests, which, while undoubtedly important and urgent, are just a part of the whole picture.

Mr. Adechi (Benin) (*spoke in French*): In the period covered by its report, the Security Council faced major challenges calling for the adoption of bold decisions. Delegations to the Council made every effort to analyse situations involved on the basis of the highly enlightening reports submitted to them by the Secretary-General. Thus, the Council was able to forge the consensus necessary for action on most of the issues before it, although the use of the veto in some cases paralysed it and revealed its limitations, notably with respect to the situation in the Middle East.

My delegation welcomes the sustained attention that the Security Council has paid to the problems of the African continent. We call on the stakeholders in the various critical African situations before the Council to spare no pains to accelerate their settlement so that the continent may devote its resources to promoting sustainable development in the context of the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. We welcome the ongoing mobilization of the Council to settle the humanitarian crisis in Darfur and the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and elsewhere.

I wish to draw attention to the Security Council mission to West Africa last June, which enabled the Council to send the parties on the ground the clear message that they must forge solid consensus at the local level in order to make progress on resolving situations before the Council. I also underline the Security Council's expanding interaction with the African Union and subregional organizations.

Conflicts on other continents are moving towards the restoration of peace and stability. The exception is the situation in the Middle East, in particular the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the situation in Iraq, where uncontrolled violence prevails and where the

heavy loss of life continues to bring grief to humankind, with no end in sight.

The Council has made great efforts to combat terrorism, as demonstrated by the report on the revitalization of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (S/2004/124) and the creation of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, as well as the Council's unanimous adoption last week of resolution 1566 (2004), which reaffirms that there can be no justification for terrorist acts against civilians.

The Security Council's consideration of questions that clearly affect international peace and security is another important part of its activities. We believe that the thematic debates are very useful as they enable the Council to anticipate challenges and allow States not members of the Council to participate in the search for solutions.

With respect to the Council itself and its working methods, I stress the need speedily to reach consensus on Council reform, in particular on the increase in Council membership. It is fortunate that during the general debate most Member States reaffirmed their desire to make the Security Council more representative of the entire international community, given that the international situation has changed considerably, that the number of Member States has grown from 51 to 191 since the creation of the United Nations and that new States possess a certain weight in demographic, economic and military terms.

Benin's position on this important question is in alignment with that of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Union. Benin believes that United Nations reform, in particular Security Council reform, will strengthen the Organization's universality and its ability to contribute effectively to the realization of the purposes enshrined in the Charter, notably the promotion of economic development and the maintenance of international peace and security.

Benin believes that any Security Council reform must take into account the legitimate aspirations of the developing countries, in particular the African countries, while preserving the Council's effectiveness and proper functioning.

Benin has no objection to the candidacy of the friendly countries of Japan, Germany and Brazil as permanent members of the Security Council. However, the scope, the nature and the modalities of the increase in the Council's membership should be founded on the principles of the sovereign equality of States and equitable geographic distribution in order to ensure the effective representation of the various regions, according to arrangements they decide upon among themselves. To be clear, there cannot be a partial or selective increase in the number of permanent and non-permanent Council members that disadvantages the developing countries.

In that context, Africa, like each other regional group, should have two permanent seats on the Security Council. Any other solution would cause a de facto imbalance and the overrepresentation of one regional group to the detriment of the others. In other words, Africa is justly calling for two permanent and two non-permanent seats in addition to the three it now holds.

Benin believes that the veto power should be extended to new permanent members of the Security Council. Moreover, non-permanent members of the Security Council should be granted the veto power, in rotation, during the month they hold the presidency of the Security Council, given the important role of the country holding the presidency and its political responsibility for Council decisions taken under its presidency.

With that in mind, Benin awaits with great interest the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenge and Change established by the Secretary-General to consider the challenges and threats confronting the world today and the changes that the United Nations must make to respond to them. My country will actively participate in the consideration of the Panel's conclusions in order to make the best use of them for the Organization's future and for all humankind.

Mr. Vohidov (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): The changes that have taken place in the international situation are compelling an increasing number of countries to review their vision of the status and the role of the United Nations and to revisit the question of how to reform the United Nations to enable it to respond more effectively to the challenges facing the international community.

Uzbekistan believes that the United Nations should remain the main component of the architecture for global security and collective international cooperation. The Organization's effectiveness depends

directly on our collective efforts to reform it. In that context, we should note that in the process of reforming the United Nations, we should ensure that the practical work of all its organs is focused on issues of truly high priority. The United Nations is faced with the challenge of adapting its mechanisms to new international realities.

In that connection, given the fact that new threats and challenges to international peace and security have appeared on the world scene, there is an urgent need to speed up the reform and the reorganization of the Organization, particularly of the Security Council. In that context, we believe it is important that reform of the Security Council enhance its role, authority and effectiveness. In the light of the events that have occurred with respect to the Iraqi crisis, the Council should work to restore the trust of the international community and demonstrate that it is able effectively to resolve the most difficult challenges before it. The Council must be able to respond appropriately to new challenges and threats. The Council's powers and means to prevent conflict should be enhanced by creating an operational mechanism giving the Council the right to use pre-emptive enforcement action.

Uzbekistan favours expanding both categories of membership of the Council according to the political and economic potential of countries and on the basis of equitable geographic representation and other criteria. But an increase in any category of Council membership should include representation of both developed and developing countries.

We reaffirm that we view Japan and Germany as credible, worthy candidates for permanent membership of the Security Council. However, I should note that increasing the membership of the Council should not be an end in itself and must not reduce the Council's effectiveness, thus jeopardizing the effectiveness of the Council's work. We believe that the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council should continue to consider all relevant issues, fully taking into account their political and practical importance for both the future Security Council and the United Nations as a whole.

Like all Members of the United Nations, Uzbekistan also hopes that the recommendations of report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, to be issued in December of this year, will open up new prospects for truly enhancing the effectiveness of the Organization.

Mr. Al-Najem (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the President of the Security Council, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, for his clear presentation of the report of the Security Council (A/59/2) to the General Assembly.

I also wish to hail the improvements made in the methods of work and procedures of the Security Council and to thank members of the Council who keep non-members regularly apprised of the Council's deliberations, thus contributing to transparency. I wish further to express our deep thanks to the former Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council for their effective and remarkable conduct of the Group's deliberations.

The General Assembly's discussion of this question gives us the opportunity to reaffirm the position of the State of Kuwait, which is based on the following established principles.

First, we stress the importance of codifying the measures taken by the Security Council to improve its methods of work without waiting for agreement on other issues such as the Council's size, composition or decision-making process.

Secondly, Kuwait supports an increase in the membership of the Security Council. But the increase should not be too big; we must maintain the Council's effectiveness and the efficiency of the decision-making process, enabling the Council to continue to confront the disputes that pose a threat to international peace and security.

Thirdly, the increase in the membership of the Security Council should be in line with the principles of equal sovereignty of States and equitable geographical representation. Let me stress that the interests of small and developing countries should not be overlooked in this exercise. Fourthly, a permanent seat should be allocated to the Group of Arab States. That seat would be occupied on a rotating basis and through coordination among members of the Group. Fifthly, we note the importance of placing limits and controls on the scope of the exercise of the right of

veto; it should be exercised only on issues that fall under Chapter VII of the Charter. Sixthly, a realistic attitude should be adopted in dealing with changes in the number of members of certain geographical groups, especially the Asian and Eastern European Groups.

Finally, we express the hope that a consensus formula will eventually be worked out to the satisfaction of all parties, while maintaining the efficiency of the work of the Security Council without any impediments.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations A/59/PV.29

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

29th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 13 October 2004, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Musambachime (Zambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 11 and 53 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/59/2)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Motoc (Romania): Since this is the first time since this session's general debate that our delegation is addressing the General Assembly, allow me sincerely to congratulate the President and the members of the Bureau on their election and to convey to the President the assurances of the Romanian delegation's full support in his endeavours. I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the dedicated efforts of the President of the Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, Mr. Julian Hunte, particularly those meant to provide new impetus to the process of revitalizing the role of the General Assembly and reforming the Security Council.

I will not touch upon issues related to the Council's annual report to the General Assembly (A/59/2), which was so ably presented by Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry, the Council President for the month of October. My intervention will focus on a few points drawn from our current experience in dealing with Security Council business.

We fully agree with the views expressed by both the Secretary-General and the majority of delegations regarding the urgent need for comprehensive reform of the United Nations system, including that of the Security Council. In this respect, Romania is looking forward to the recommendations that are to be provided in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change appointed by the Secretary-General, and we will support efforts to build political consensus to consider 2005 as the year to take decisive steps towards the reform of the Organization.

Our delegation shares the mainstream ideas regarding reform of the Security Council, such as the need for the Council to adjust to new international challenges, the need for increased democratization and balanced geographical representation and the need to respect crucial values of collective action and effective multilateralism. In our opinion, the terms of reference for any future Security Council reform should remain efficiency, adaptability and progress. In our view, those are also the key words accompanying the notion of Security Council reform.

As an elected member of the Security Council with nine months of service behind it, Romania constantly strives to make its own contribution to efforts aimed at the improvement of the Council's working methods, a greater level of transparency and adjustment of the decision-making process. In that regard, the public debate organized by the Romanian

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presidency of the Security Council in July (see S/PV.5007) and its follow-up process, in which our delegation is committed to assist, will help us re-think the relationship between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations, promoting, among other things, the concepts of cooperation and subsidiarity.

Romania supports a robust enlargement of the Security Council, with due attention to preserving the effectiveness of its decision-making and its overall activity. We have on several occasions had the opportunity to elaborate on the specifics of our position on the matter. I will therefore limit myself to restating only that Romania strongly supports the proposal that, as a minimum, one additional elected seat should be afforded the Eastern European regional group.

Last but not least, we feel that any decision on Security Council reform should enjoy consensus, or at least the broadest support possible, within the United Nations membership.

Mr. Hackett (Barbados): My delegation welcomes this opportunity to participate in the joint debate on agenda items 11 and 53, on the report of the Security Council and on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom and current President of the Security Council, for his comprehensive presentation of the report of the Council (A/59/2). The report is clear and highly descriptive in nature. We have therefore noted it, and we have no specific comments to make on it at the present time. Our intervention focuses on Security Council reform, since it is our view that reform of the Council is pivotal to the continued relevance of this Organization.

It is possible that some may ask why a small State like Barbados has an interest in this issue, since they may see Security Council reform as a matter of concern for the big States of the international community. We believe, however, that every Member of the United Nations, no matter how large or small, has a stake and an interest in the reform of the Council, for the most meaningful way to ensure international peace and security is for there to be a collective response to global challenges and crises.

As recently as last year, the international community witnessed the deadlock in the Security Council over the issue of Iraq and the eventual decision of a group of States to pursue a partisan approach despite the deadlock. That, in our view, threatens the important principle of collective security, which is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and it also threatens the Council's legitimacy. Such an important organ of the United Nations, we believe, should be reformed to enable it to serve as an effective and legitimate instrument in the maintenance of international peace and security. This means, in our view, that it must have the capability to reduce or contain threats to international peace and security.

As a member of the Organization with a commitment to multilateral diplomacy, we believe that the time has come for the United Nations to make some tough decisions on reform of the Security Council. Although it can be rightly argued that the performance of the Council in recent years has raised questions about its legitimacy and effectiveness, we believe it can become an important instrument for peace if its shortcomings are addressed.

It is in this spirit that Barbados maintains that the Security Council must be made more representative of today's membership of the United Nations, as well as more transparent in its working methods and more democratic in its decision-making. We therefore call for the expansion of the Security Council membership in both its permanent and non-permanent categories. It has been said that representation is a key factor in helping to determine the legitimacy of the Council. That is why we go further, to suggest that representatives from the main regions of the world, including Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, should be considered for inclusion in the permanent category of Security Council membership and a fair representation of the developing world in its non-permanent category. Such changes, we believe, would make the membership of the Council more representative of the modern world.

In respect of the working methods of the Council, we believe that the use of the veto should be re-examined. If the veto cannot be eliminated, then its use should be significantly curtailed, and guidelines should be drawn up for that purpose. In a world where the ideals of good governance are being emphasized, the continued use of this undemocratic device should

not be allowed to frustrate the broader will of the Members of the Organization.

This intervention is intended to represent our initial views on this key aspect of reform of the Security Council. We stand ready to participate actively in the Open-ended Working Group to continue discussions and negotiations, with a view to arriving at solutions that would be acceptable to all.

While it is disappointing that discussions in the Group to date have not led to any agreement on the issues, the Barbados delegation would nevertheless like to thank the Chairman of the Working Group for his efforts in leading the work of the Group over the past year.

We would like also to express the hope that the Working Group will be able to find a way to achieve consensus on this very important matter in the very near future.

Mr. Nesho (Albania): Let me begin by expressing our appreciation to the Ambassador of the United Kingdom, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, President of the Security Council for this month, for his comprehensive presentation of the Council's report to the General Assembly. My delegation also commends the excellent work done by the Secretariat in compiling this highly informative report.

The reform of the Security Council — that very important body of the United Nations — is vital to the Organization and should be carried out in line with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Albania's views on the issue of Council reform have been voiced here by many other countries. We believe that such reform should address the need to strengthen and increase the efficiency of the Security Council. It should take into consideration the changes that have occurred on the international scene.

The expansion of the Security Council remains one of the key aspects of that body's reform. It is an important component of a broader reform that will enable the Council to play a major role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Albania supports a reform of the Security Council that will facilitate broad participation on the part of the States Members of the Organization. We believe that such reform will enshrine both a wider geographical dimension and a more democratic spirit. We share the opinion that the outcome of the reform must be the product of a broad consensus on the part of the international community. In that regard, we think that we all should work together to take decisions that are based on the broadest possible consensus.

Albania is of the opinion that the much-needed reform of the Council should aim at rendering the Council more representative, democratic, reliable and effective, with democratically elected new members — a Council that is accountable to the States Members of the Organization.

The expansion of the Council should not overshadow other issues of equal importance to genuine and effective reform. In addition to the composition of the Security Council, the reform should tackle a broad spectrum of issues. The Albanian Government holds the view that further progress should be made in the area of the working methods of the Council, as there has already been a positive impact on its transparency. We believe also that the initiatives that have already been taken to ensure greater involvement on the part of the United Nations membership in the Council's deliberations should be strengthened and broadened.

Albania welcomes the trend demonstrated throughout the past year towards a stronger partnership between the Security Council and regional organizations. We encourage a more dynamic dialogue in the Security Council on this matter.

Mr. Grigore (Republic of Moldova): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for this month, Ambassador Emir Jones Parry of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for presenting the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

Our appreciation goes to the Secretariat for an informative, analytical and concise report, and we commend the fact that the structure of, and approach to, the report used in recent years has been maintained.

During the past 12 months, the Security Council addressed an extensive number of issues. In discharging its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council tackled difficult situations in various parts of the globe: Iraq, the Middle East, Afghanistan and other hot spots, mainly in Africa, but also on other continents.

The fight against terrorism continued to be a major theme for the Council's consideration, and new and old challenges and threats were added to the Council's agenda: the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, peacekeeping and cooperation with regional organizations, post-conflict reconciliation and justice in conflict and post-conflict societies.

I would like to touch upon several issues of particular significance to the Republic of Moldova.

The recent adoption of Security Council resolution 1566 (2004), which is aimed at strengthening international cooperation in the fight against terrorism, and the creation of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) Executive Directorate (CTED) demonstrates the Council's continuing resolve to combat this scourge in all its forms and manifestations. The Republic of Moldova strongly supports the CTC's activities and backs the relevant efforts made at the regional and subregional levels aimed at the full and timely implementation of resolution 1373 (2001).

Secondly, by its resolution 1540 (2004), the Council for the first time addressed the problem of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and imposed far-reaching obligations on Member States. Preventing terrorists and other non-State actors from acquiring, developing, or transporting weapons of mass destruction will significantly reduce the threat posed to international peace and security. The Republic of Moldova is committed to the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and is currently undertaking a number of actions at the national level to this end.

Thirdly, I would like to commend the Council's determination in responding to crises and outbreaks of hostilities, as well as its flexibility in authorizing, during the year, four peacekeeping operations — in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Haiti. The surge in peacekeeping operations required additional troops and resources, and many countries, including my own, accordingly responded to the Council's request. The Republic of Moldova is currently participating with personnel in two of those missions and is preparing an additional peacekeeping contingent.

We commend the continuing trend towards greater transparency in the Council's work and note with appreciation the increasing openness of the Council. The regular open debates held on a large number of issues are very important to that end, increasing the possibility for non-members to express their views on major problems on the international agenda.

One of the most recent debates, on the rule of law and transnational justice in conflict and post-conflict societies, has been focused on adherence to the rule of law in States facing or emerging from conflicts. We would like to highlight, among the issues addressed during this debate, the problem of the existence of lawless areas in the world. While international organizations are improving and developing new capabilities and methods of handling difficult conflict and post-conflict situations, in territories without recognized authorities, including separatist entities — as is the case in the Transdniestria region of the Republic of Moldova — illegal and criminal activities flourish that often undermine the security and stability of entire regions. The international community, the United Nations, especially the Security Council, should find a way to support the restoration of the rule of law in lawless areas, in accordance with international norms and standards.

The Republic of Moldova fully supports the efforts to reform the United Nations system with the aim of enhancing its leading role in international affairs, reinforcing its capacity to address new threats and challenges, and ensuring a stronger and more effective Organization — a goal shared by the vast majority of its Member States.

The central part of this process must be the reform of the Security Council. The composition of the Security Council must mirror the changes that have taken place in the international context since it was established. Regrettably, the activities of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council, the body tasked with the Council's reform, have yielded no results after 10 years of deliberations. In this regard, the Republic of Moldova, like other Member States, looks forward to concrete recommendations from the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change on how to advance this process.

The President took the Chair.

Too often, the Security Council has been accused of failure in discharging its main responsibilities. It is essential, therefore, to make it more efficient, a task

that can be achieved, in our view, by improving its representativeness, legitimacy, transparency and accountability.

The Republic of Moldova pronounces itself in favour of a moderate enlargement of the Council's composition and of a reasonable increase in the number of permanent and non-permanent members that would correspond to the principle of fair geographical distribution and would ensure an adequate balance between industrialized and developing States. At the same time, we would like to reiterate our position that the expansion of the category of non-permanent members should necessarily include the creation of an additional seat for the Group of Eastern European States, the number of whose members has more than doubled during the past decade.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that what is really needed at this stage is political will on the part of Member States to continue the efforts to attain general agreement on the issues involved, starting with those proposals for which there seems to be wide support. In our view, these include the following: the expansion of both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of membership, including both developing and developed countries in the expanded permanent membership; reforms in the decision-making process; and the need for periodic review. We express our hope that during the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Member States will succeed in resolving the pending issues and will achieve tangible results.

Mr. Kamanzi (Rwanda) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to take this opportunity, Sir, to convey to you, on behalf of my delegation, our sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly and on the excellent way in which you have been facilitating the discussions in this session. I am loath to let slip this opportunity to commend your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Julian Hunte, on a very fruitful presidency of the fifty-eighth session, particularly with regard to agenda item 53, which is now before us for discussion.

The inclusion on the agenda of the item regarding reform of the Security Council was timely. Reform of the Security Council has become unavoidable, as most speakers stated during the general debate at this session. I do not need to recall that the new challenges and threats facing our ever-changing world are such that we must question our traditional approaches to the resolution of our complex problems of peace and security and adjust our approach as needed.

More than ever before, the world needs a Security Council that is representative, active, transparent and, most important, conciliatory, acting on behalf of — and in the interest of — all nations without exception. A representative Security Council means a Council in which all the continents of the world have a meaningful voice. It is thus crucial that Africa and Latin America should now be given permanent seats on the Council. We can no longer leave countries by the wayside; nor can the views of some members carry more weight than those of their counterparts.

We therefore believe that the number of Security Council members should not only be increased in the non-permanent category, but also — and most important — in the permanent category. The new permanent members should enjoy the same rights as the five current permanent members. The new permanent members should, as far as possible, come from the group of nations that have performed with distinction with regard to their commitment to the process of conflict-resolution and in support of global peacekeeping endeavours at the regional and international levels. These would also include nations that have been outstanding in their commitment to the promotion of the economic and security interests of the most disadvantaged countries.

By an active Council, we mean a Council that will remain focused — on an ongoing and non-discriminatory basis — on problems of security and fundamental human rights. By an active Council, we mean one whose functioning would not run the risk of being paralysed by unconstructive, undesirable differences among the members of a reformed Council. From an active Council, we would expect unfailing momentum in the decision-making process. We would expect realistic — but also speedy —decisions, not calculating decisions, particularly when human lives are under imminent threat.

I hope I am not mistaken when I reaffirm that we all agree that the Council should act and take decisions on behalf of the entire United Nations family: we do not believe that the Council takes its decisions on behalf of the 15 current members. In that regard, we believe that some decisions should require the contribution of States not members of the Council,

particularly those in a position to better analyse the issues before the Council.

Obviously, it is even more important that the countries directly concerned in the matters before the Council be informed and consulted at every stage in the consideration of those matters. It is essential that they have an opportunity to provide clarifications on elements that to date the Council has often tended to analyse on the basis of information from sometimes limited and biased sources. Have we not seen situations in which a country involved in an issue on the Council's agenda has only been informally informed of this thanks to the kindness of certain members — or has not been informed at all? What would the nations of the world stand to gain by counting on a decision-making body with such esoteric methods of work?

The proactive Council to which the international community aspires is a Council that properly uses existing information about latent crises in certain parts of the world and that can anticipate the explosion of such crises and the complexity of their consequences. A reinvented Council should ensure that it is able to mobilize the resources necessary for it to act in a functional and preventive manner.

We also think that a reformed Council should place greater stress on conciliation by maximizing efforts to find common ground among the parties to a dispute. Would it not be better to help them eliminate the source of their dispute than to keep the crisis in a state of latent hostility, a situation that is not very helpful to either party?

Those points summarize our contribution to the remoulding of the image of the Council for the future. We are convinced that the nations of the world have every means at their disposal to shape that image. We must try hard to take advantage of this opportunity to take a decisive step forward. Future generations will be proud of us if — and only if — we can bequeath to them an effective body that will help to spare them the vicissitudes that our generation has unfortunately not been able to avoid. If we are sure that that is what we want to do, we can do it.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to thank Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry, President of the Security Council, for his comprehensive presentation of the report of the Security Council (A/59/2) to the General Assembly. We must note that the Council has accomplished work whose volume, intensity and political scope grow each year.

Bulgaria welcomes the positive trends in the Security Council's working methods. As a Council member in 2002 and 2003, Bulgaria worked ceaselessly to improve the transparency of its deliberations. The report attests to the increased number of public meetings, particularly on important issues on the Council's agenda, giving all Member States an opportunity to participate. Steps have been taken in the right direction with regard to harmonizing the work of the Council with that of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council. Periodic consultations among the Presidents of those organs have now become a regular practice. Through the Arria formula, an effort has been made to more thoroughly consult representatives of civil society through non-governmental organizations. In that area, however, much remains to be done.

Bulgaria is satisfied with the level of cooperation — and in some cases even partnership — that has been established with regional organizations. The Council's debates with the participation of representatives of such organizations have proved to be particularly productive. As a border country of the western Balkans and Chair-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Bulgaria is participating actively in the Security Council's cooperation with the European Union, NATO and the OSCE in Kosovo, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in other regions of common interest. My country attaches major importance to such cooperation.

Questions related to the equitable representation of United Nations Member States in the Security Council and to an increase Council membership are directly linked to the international community's efforts to find better institutional responses to present-day challenges to world peace and security. That is an essential element of overall reform of the United Nations, to which Bulgaria is deeply attached.

The head of the Bulgarian delegation for the fifty-ninth session, Minister for Foreign Affairs Solomon Passy, has declared from this rostrum my country's unfailing support for improving the effectiveness of the principal organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council (see A/59/PV.8). Bulgaria fully shares the common will of

all Member States to successfully carry out United Nations reform as quickly as possible — a wish expressed in the Millennium Declaration. Reforming the United Nations while taking today's realities into account is the best way to strengthen and consolidate multilateralism as the fundamental organizing principle of international relations.

My country has always favoured updating the way in which Member States are represented in the Security Council. Bulgaria supports increasing the number of both permanent and non-permanent members in order to improve the Council's representativity and its democratic functioning. Since the membership of the Group of Eastern European States has nearly doubled since the end of the cold war, we should think about an extra non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the countries of that Group.

Bulgaria awaits with interest the outcome of the work of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change appointed by the Secretary-General. We hope that the Panel's report will be a solid basis for the membership of the United Nations to continue its work on reforming the Organization and the Security Council with greater awareness of problems and of their possible solutions.

Mr. Vengesa (Zimbabwe): We have listened to the views of the delegations that have taken the floor before us. Throughout those statements, we noted a commonality of interests regarding the absolute necessity of reforming the Security Council. However, beyond that common view, differences abound with regard to detail.

I have taken the floor on this item to reiterate what my delegation said last year and in the years before that. What is perhaps striking is that colleagues who have taken the floor before me have also repeated their same old positions, with which we have all become too familiar. The question we need to ask ourselves is whether we want to have this item on our agenda ad infinitum. I think that the time has come to conclude discussion of this topic.

The continued failure to find progress on the issue of Security Council reform is no longer acceptable to my delegation. It is certainly not acceptable to the world outside this Hall. This is the eleventh year since the General Assembly established the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and other Matters related to the Security Council. Eleven years later, we have encountered gridlock on the path we have travelled, and there is no positive end in sight. As I have said before, the debate on Security Council reform has been too drawn out. We think the fifty-ninth session of the Assembly is an auspicious occasion on which to achieve a breakthrough on this matter.

A truly democratic and representative United Nations should be at the centre of international governance. It is therefore critical that, in reforming the Security Council, consideration be given to creating an organ that reflects today's international realities. My delegation wishes to warn against the creation of a disequilibrium in the Council — an unequal situation that Foreign Minister Mudenge has described as akin to the presence in one kraal of both steers and bulls. Yes, we need to move with speed to reform the Security Council, but we also need to proceed with caution.

We agree with countries that, like South Africa, have identified the Assembly as the only democratic and genuinely representative universal organ of the United Nations, uniquely positioned to achieve consensus on this and other important issues. Any attempts to circumvent the Assembly will have the opposite and unintended effect of alienating the majority of the United Nations membership as well as compromising the integrity and credibility of the Organization.

Finally, Zimbabwe supports expanding the Security Council at both the permanent and the non-permanent levels. We are willing to further engage Member States from our region and beyond on how that can be done.

Ms. Holguín (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, current President of the Security Council, for presenting the report of that organ (A/59/2) to the General Assembly. We welcome the fact that this item is again being considered jointly with the item on reform and expansion of the Security Council, because in our view the two items are intimately linked.

We appreciate the work of the permanent and non-permanent members of the Council. We appreciate the efforts they have made in recent years to make their work more efficient and transparent to the international

community. However, it is enough to read the report of the Council to understand that it is basically just a compendium of the matters that have been examined, the activities undertaken and the resolutions adopted. The brief analytical summary that has been included for the past three years provides barely enough information about progress, regression or trends in the conflicts addressed on the Council's agenda.

We are concerned about the evolution of the thematic debates in the Council. That evolution may create a very worrisome precedent. Certain situations may be incorporated into the Council's agenda as the result of a thematic resolution. Thematic resolutions may be applied to other situations that are not part of the Council's agenda. These resolutions may be well intentioned, but they are occasionally misdirected, as the result of applications going beyond the norms of international humanitarian law, and may end up not contributing to solving conflicts or truly protecting the victims of violence.

The clarity, objectivity and transparency with which the Secretariat works on topics is indispensable for the Council's decisions. Coordination and consultation with countries when preparing reports, as well as equal treatment for all States, are fundamental. We cannot have first- and second-class countries. We must also all equally have precise information regarding the work done on different topics by different parts of the Secretariat.

There is consensus on the urgent need to reform the methods of work and increase the number of members on the Security Council. The consensus arises as the result of a lack of true accountability towards the body in which we are all represented, since no substantive information is provided to the General Assembly. The Security Council is also not a democratic organ, since there is a veto, nor is it representative, in as much as there is a regional imbalance that does not favour the developing world. It is also not efficient because it does not concentrate on its real agenda, which is conflict resolution. We all agree that we need a Security Council that is more representative of the international community as a whole and reflects the geopolitical realities of today's world.

For Colombia, the issues of reform, methods of work and the veto are all interconnected. They must be resolved as a package. We have historically objected to the veto, but, if it cannot be eliminated, at least it should be restricted to Chapter VII action in cases of threats to the peace, breaches of the peace or acts of aggression, as set forth in the Charter. As for expanding the membership, we believe that expansion of the permanent membership does not seem to be supported by Member States. However, we could expand membership in the non-permanent category in line with the principles of equitable geographical distribution and sovereign equality. We would like to help build a consensus concerning the non-permanent member category that will provide equitable representation for all regions, in particular developing countries. We believe that the procedures to select candidates on a geographical basis should be based on fully legal rules and enjoy political legitimacy, thus guaranteeing equal opportunity with regard to the new seats and avoiding any discrimination between developed and developing countries.

Efforts to reform the Council must take into account the fact that internal conflicts make up almost the entire agenda of the Council, while its area of competence is to resolve conflicts that threaten international peace and security. Many of the failures of the Council are due to its configuration created just after the Second World War, when it had to deal with international conflicts. That shortcoming is evidenced in a lack of understanding of the realities that it has to contend with. Depending entirely on the reports of the Secretariat, at times it has deliberated on situations without even hearing from the State involved. The State is invited only to a formal meeting to listen to a decision that has already been taken on the conflict and the future of that State. Colombia considers it fundamental that any State that is involved in a situation must be present at all informal closed consultations of the Council at which that situation is to be analysed and defined for its agenda. The United Nations must work with States to strengthen the rule of law and institutions.

I would like to finish by saying that Security Council reform must be part of overall reform of the United Nations aimed at strengthening the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, so as to regain the ground that has been lost to the Security Council. The Assembly should once again become the pre-eminent organ of the Organization, and the Economic and Social Council should be able to

effectively contend with social and economic challenges before they turn into armed disputes.

It is in that context that Colombia appreciates and supports the efforts made by the United Nations and its Secretary-General to restore the lost consensus on the manner in which to guarantee international peace and security. We expect a great deal from the report in December of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. We will analyse its proposals with the sense of responsibility that is incumbent upon us as a Member State committed to multilateralism, as well as a country that particularly suffers as a result of global problems such as terrorism and illicit drugs.

Mr. Musambachime (Zambia): There is no doubt that the role of the Security Council as enshrined in the United Nations Charter is paramount in that it has the primary duty and responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It should be noted that, while other organs of the United Nations make recommendations to Governments, the Council alone has the power to take decisions which Member States are obligated to carry out. It is in this regard that the Council's work should be transparent, democratic and accountable to the larger membership of the General Assembly in order for it to be effective and its decisions appreciated and respected.

My delegation wishes to acknowledge with great appreciation the achievements of the Security Council in the execution of its duties. It has carried out many peace initiatives that have resulted in the peaceful resolution of various conflicts around the world. Through its peacekeeping missions, in which Zambia is proud to continue to participate, many countries which were at war have succeeded in re-establishing peace and are in transition to rebuilding their countries. The African continent has had its fair share of these conflicts and I wish to commend the role played by the Security Council and the African Union in helping to resolve those issues.

The report of the Security Council has provided insight into the issues that have taken centre stage in Africa. The Council has effectively responded to crises and outbreaks of violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and the Sudan in the Darfur region. In the West African sub-region there has been significant progress in peace-building efforts and in some countries, like Sierra Leone and Liberia, post-conflict peace is becoming consolidated. Those are positive developments that Zambia, through the African Union, has supported and welcomed.

In view of the importance attached to the role of the Security Council, the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session adopted resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993, in which it established the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council. That issue has been on the Assembly's agenda for over a decade without any conclusive resolution. For that reason, my delegation stands ready to continue participating in the reform process of this serious and complex matter to ensure success and progress on it.

It is worth noting that at its inception the United Nations had 51 members, while the Security Council had 11. Since then the membership of the Organization has increased to 191, but that of the Security Council to only 15. My delegation, therefore, shares the views of the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Union and other Members in calling for an increase in Security Council membership, especially among developing countries, to reflect current realities. In that context, it is my delegation's view that the expansion of the Council should be in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

My delegation further wishes to emphasize that the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council should be one of mutual respect, enhanced by increased transparency and improved working methods. Regrettably, my delegation has observed that the Council has been gradually encroaching on the powers and the mandate of the Assembly and other organs by involving itself in such matters as gender equality, poverty eradication, children in armed conflict, rule of law and human rights, which traditionally fall within the competence of the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. That encroachment has to be avoided in order to enhance specialization and reduce overlap on issues.

The veto exercised by permanent members of the Security Council was created for Chapter VII issues and its purpose was to promote collective interests. That objective, however, seems to have been ignored by the Council's permanent members. The veto power has regrettably been abused and has become discriminatory and undemocratic; its continued use has

eroded the principles of transparency and accountability in the Council's working methods and procedures. Indeed, it has created two categories of membership in the Council, despite the principle of sovereign equality set out in Article 2, paragraph 1, of the Charter.

It is important that the veto be used for the benefit of all Member States of the United Nations; on too many occasions it has served only to protect national interests. In some cases, certain members have utilized the veto only on issues that they considered as endangering their own perception of threats to world peace.

In that regard, my delegation concurs with the proposals made by some members of the Open-ended Working Group that the permanent members exercise responsibility and accountability in the use of the veto or, indeed, abolish it altogether. Furthermore, they should particularly refrain from using the veto on resolutions authorizing the use of force or imposing sanctions. In addition, permanent members should not use the veto when a decision has been supported by the majority of Council members, and its use should be limited only to Chapter VII issues. Zambia also concurs with a proposal that it should be possible to overrule a veto with a two-thirds majority vote in the General Assembly, under the "uniting for peace" formula set out in General Assembly resolution 377 (V) of 3 November 1950.

In conclusion, Zambia wishes to appeal to the Assembly to support the proposal of the Open-ended Working Group in its efforts to enhance the decision-making and liaison methods of the Security Council. It is my delegation's considered view that once Council reforms are undertaken, that important United Nations organ will be democratic, effective, transparent and accountable. Those tenets will underpin the multilateral approach to the ever-changing threats to world peace. It is with that in mind that my delegation looks forward to the report and recommendations of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change as it will provide a platform on which the United Nations can construct its responses to the current and future threats that face the whole world.

Mr. Kau (Fiji): Fiji supports the reform of the Security Council. We also subscribe to the belief that the time for reform is now and that due attention and focus must be given to it to ensure its success. We certainly run the risk of rendering this body insignificant and outdated should we fail to act in a timely manner.

The latest report of the Security Council recorded a hectic and intense past 12 months, with issues covered by the Council becoming more complex and wide ranging. If the report is anything to go by, the Council is being challenged to the point where a reform of its structure and systems, including its membership, is necessary to ensure an effective and truly multilateral Council based on the rule of law, democracy and equity.

While discussions on the proposed reform have been limited to a few key areas, namely, the expansion of membership, its structure and its working methods, Fiji is of the view that the reform of the Council must be undertaken in a comprehensive manner in the context of the reform and revitalization of the United Nations. After almost 60 years in existence, the United Nations must continue to be in tune with the modern world in order to better serve its Charter.

The decision-making process of the Council must as much as possible reflect the new world order. To that end, Fiji supports the expansion and strengthening of the Security Council, both in its permanent and non-permanent membership. Fiji's Prime Minister, The Honourable Laisenia Qarase, addressing the general debate in September, called for the inclusion of countries such as Japan, India, South Africa and Brazil as permanent members in an enlarged Council. He argued that their inclusion would ensure a balanced Council where the voices of all, including smaller developing nations, are heard. Representation on the Security Council will only be truly democratic when equity and justice are enshrined as guiding principles.

Fiji also supports the review of the veto power of the permanent members, with a view to ensuring that those powers are used to contribute positively to the Council's role in preventive diplomacy and not as an unnecessary impediment to it.

Fiji supports efforts to improve the reaction time of the United Nations and the Security Council to peacekeeping calls. The issue has been the subject of continuous debate and the suggestions for improvement have been many, with the most prominent being the enhancement of the triangular relationship between the General Assembly, the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries. The enhancement

of that relationship will go a long way to strengthening the multilateral role of the United Nations, in particular, the Security Council, in the areas of peacekeeping and peacemaking.

Furthermore, Fiji is also of the view that effective response to peacekeeping calls can be better addressed by the Council through the establishment of standby facilities and personnel. In so doing, the Security Council will be strengthened by a reduction in its deployment time and the potential to pre-empt situations in which calls for the United Nations to take preventive measures are prevalent. The Council's performance in peacekeeping is to a great extent measured by its capacity to mount effective and timely peacekeeping operations.

Reforms are not easy to undertake, particularly in a multilateral institution with almost universal membership which is based on the concept of the sovereign equality of States. The deep divergences of views and opinions on the best approach for tackling the challenges confronting the world and the international community are added burdens to the process.

We therefore look to the outcome of the report of the High-level Panel established by the Secretary-General to provide some practical and pragmatic solutions. We also hope that the diversity of membership of the Panel will ensure a varied and balanced assessment, with positive recommendations that will take the United Nations closer to the achievement of those important milestones. Fiji stands ready to be engaged in the deliberations on the report.

Sir, Fiji looks to your guidance and competent leadership to take us forward in this time of reform, following closely from where your predecessor, Mr. Julian Hunte, President of the fifty-eighth session, left off.

An important challenge is before us, and the time has come when the collective will and cooperation of all Member States will be important and success will be measured by how much progress we achieve during the fifty-ninth session.

Mr. Briz Gutiérrez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful to Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, who in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of October introduced the annual report on the activities of that body at the beginning of the joint debate.

Although there is an obvious link between the two items on our agenda, we feel that the report of the Security Council (A/59/2) is sufficiently important to be considered on its own. Needless to say, it forms one of the chief connections between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Article 15 of the Charter provides for the General Assembly to receive and consider annual and special reports from the Security Council. That involves more than a merely symbolic or ritual act. It constitutes one of the fundamental connections between the two organs and, above all, a tool allowing the Assembly to fulfil its role as the main organ of the United Nations in the areas of deliberation, adoption of policies and representation of the Member States of the United Nations.

We are pleased to note in the report before us a feature we welcomed in last year's report, namely, that it is a further step in the right direction, inasmuch as progress has been made with regard to its size and contents. Some of those present here will recall prior reports that did not at all comply with the explicit intent of the Charter provision cited above. Although admittedly the present report does not fully meet our expectations, at least it fulfils the minimum requirement of keeping the Assembly informed of the extensive programme of activities of the Council during the reporting period.

We also welcome the fact that the work of the Council has gained somewhat in transparency, due to various factors. In particular, the idea that the elected members of the Council represent the membership as a whole has now been institutionalized more than ever before. We are grateful in that connection to the delegations of Brazil, Chile and Mexico for having kept the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean informed of activities in the Council. We extend our thanks in that connection to the Non-Aligned Movement caucus.

There is also the fact that the ever more frequent practice of holding public meetings has contributed to the greater involvement of all States in the work of the Council, by at least providing them with an opportunity to express their views on issues considered relevant by the Council — despite the fact that it may be doubtful

whether the external points of view exert any appreciable influence on the decisions finally taken.

Further, there is also the perception that even the permanent members have been more receptive than in the past to criticism addressed to them concerning the closed nature of the work of the Council. The frequent statements by the presidency of the Council, when countries are occupying the Council's attention, bear witness to that.

That said, we can not but recognize that the relationship between the organs of the United Nations, in particular between the Security Council and the General Assembly, still leaves much to be desired. It could be contended that the concentration of prescriptive power on issues of the greatest importance in that 15 member body, dominated as it is by the five permanent members, has thus far been at the expense of the authority of the General Assembly. That does not necessarily have to be so, since as the Charter provides that the various organs, each with its own composition and particular powers, should support each other reciprocally. Nevertheless, experience has shown — and we have repeatedly expressed our regret here in this forum — that, as the Security Council gains ascendancy, the General Assembly loses it.

That being so, the report of the Security Council implicitly reminds us that two crucial tasks are still pending. I refer to the ongoing reform of the working methods of the General Assembly and to the long-delayed reform of the composition of the Security Council.

Concerning the first point, we could widen the reform agenda and comment on the United Nations system of governance, which no doubt requires some updating. That is part of the equation whose virtual absence from our deliberations we regret, inasmuch as, in the last analysis, the unsatisfactory relationship between the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council is a challenge that sooner or later we shall have to face seriously.

Concerning the second point, convinced as we are of the need for the Security Council to be more representative, transparent and efficient, we advocate an increase in the number of its members. Our position has been evolving so that we can now agree that the increase should apply to both categories of permanent and non-permanent members, with regard to the need for adequate geographical representation.

Finally, may I express the hope that, pending the conclusion of the reform of our main organs, we shall be able at least to strengthen the few links that exist between them. In that regard, we hope that the recommendations of the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change will contain measures that contribute to the discussions and strengthen the halting steps taken over the past two years in response to the challenge.

Mr. Bennouna (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Thank you, Sir, for presiding over this debate, which has been lengthy and extremely fruitful and positive. I hope that under your leadership we will be able to draw the best possible conclusions for the future of our Organization.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to congratulate the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, the current President of the Security Council, on his highly appreciated introduction to the Assembly of the annual report of the Security Council, which is before us now for our consideration following unanimous approval by the members of the Council.

The discussion on the future composition of the Security Council and its activities is another opportunity for us to further develop our common thinking about ways and means to accelerate the reform of that crucial body within the United Nations system, to allow it to meet the challenges that pose a threat to international peace and security.

Our shared goal of reforming the Security Council cannot be met by means of a mere cosmetic improvement in its working methods. That goal, rather, requires a profound rethinking of the architecture of that principal organ of the United Nations system in order to make it more representative and to assure its credibility and legitimacy.

The need to adapt the Security Council, which was created in response to the issues of the Second World War, is obvious, particularly since the end of the cold war and the approaches that characterized that period. Certainly, at the time of the adoption of the Charter there were considerations that led to the creation of permanent members and to granting them the veto power. As we all know, that was an exceptional historical context, which cannot serve as a model that can be reproduced or extrapolated from. On the other hand, while taking into account the profound

upheavals that have occurred in international affairs, we must not worsen imbalances or freeze development. That is the essential issue that we have to address when we discuss the composition of the Security Council: while it is difficult to abandon certain aspects of the heritage of the past, should we try to reform that legacy by worsening some of the anachronisms it has left us, or, would it not perhaps be better to put it to one side and try to reduce its effects by, first of all, focusing on the non-permanent category of members, looking both at their number and at the duration of their mandates, which can be altered.

Of course, we also understand the legitimate aspirations of certain great nations to participate on a permanent basis in the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. That is where the heritage of history comes into play. We should certainly not try and worsen its effects, exacerbate divisions or, worse still, freeze the effects of history.

The Kingdom of Morocco is an old country, familiar with the vicissitudes of history. We therefore feel that any revision of the Charter to change the composition of the Council must take into account both the heritage of the past and the need to give the Charter all the flexibility necessary to adapt to future developments. It is in much the same way that one recognizes good legislators and good jurists: they are able to resolve the problems of the present while allowing room for adaptation in the future. In other words, the Kingdom of Morocco believes that realism and wisdom indicate that the international community, in its consideration of the composition of the Security Council, should focus on geographical and cultural factors by, in due course, adjusting the duration of the terms of office of non-permanent members.

However, there is no point in changing the composition of the Security Council if at the same time the international community does not address the issue of the Security Council's ability and capacity to react to new threats, such as international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It will certainly be necessary to take another look at the Council's capacities with respect to the peaceful settlement of disputes and to addressing serious threats to international peace and security, given that the Council's job is not to formulate generalized and abstract rules — which is normally the province of the General Assembly — but, rather, to respond to specific crises and other situations. It is certain that we cannot merely address the issue of institutional reforms without looking at the normative side. We cannot change the composition and functioning of bodies without considering the question of their capabilities.

Turning to the issue of the pacific settlement of disputes pursuant to Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter, the functions of the Security Council and of the Secretary-General must complement each other in order to bring parties together to achieve the desired political solutions. In order for that process to work, all parties must accept the decisions that are taken and must cooperate fully with the special representatives appointed by the Secretary-General to implement those decisions.

On the other hand, the United Nations, obviously, does not stop at the Security Council. Even when discussing the Council, we need to remember that while considering the Organization's role in the maintenance of peace and security, the developing countries believe that its other function should also be revitalized: the promotion of development. There are two sides to the United Nations: the maintenance of peace; and development. One cannot function without the other. In our view, it would be useful to clearly indicate the relationship between the restoration of peace and the consolidation of that peace through economic and social activities. The relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions needs to be deepened, so that once a given crisis has been resolved it cannot suddenly be rekindled because of the system's inability to build a real peace.

In that regard, we hope that the basic functions of the Economic and Social Council — regulating and coordinating multilateral Government action in the economic area — will be clarified and specified in order to mitigate the globalization of market forces.

Finally, the General Assembly should, as it is doing today, be able to debate the activities of smaller bodies and thus subject them to the scrutiny of the entire international community. As the most universal body, the General Assembly has the legitimacy to undertake that task.

In conclusion, we eagerly await the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. We are convinced that they will be of help to us all and will trigger the reform we

want to accomplish. We hope that that new impetus will be realized when we commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the Organization.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in the joint debate on agenda items 11 and 53, on the report of the Security Council and on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. A total of 106 speakers took the floor during the six meetings devoted to consideration of those two items. This demonstrates the importance that Member States attach to the question of Security Council reform.

With respect to agenda item 11, "Report of the Security Council", I recall that, under paragraph 12 of the annex to resolution 51/241, the President of the General Assembly is called on, inter alia, to assess the debate on this item and to consider the need for further consideration of the report of the Security Council.

During the debate, many speakers welcomed the report's inclusion of an analytical segment on the work of the Council, in response to the expectation voiced by Member States. However, those States had called for the analytical segment to be more thorough so that they might identify progress, difficulties and potential solutions considered by the Council in its programme of work.

Some speakers stressed the considerable amount of work carried out by the Council in the period under consideration, in particular concerning hotbeds of tension in Africa and elsewhere.

A great many speakers expressed concern over the current trend in the Council of organizing thematic debates on topics falling under the competence of other principal organ and of legislating in areas that impinge on the General Assembly's purview. They emphasized the need to restore the balance of competencies between the Assembly and the Council and advocated a greater degree of cooperation between the two organs.

Several speakers welcomed the Council's efforts to act in a more transparent manner. They welcomed initiatives to better inform Member States, in particular through information meetings, and called for those efforts to be stepped up.

Speakers took note of the visits the Council undertook to the field in order to better assess situations that affect International peace and security and require urgent action on its part. Others felt, however, that in the course of its visits, the Council should seek to compile a broader range of information. They noted that the visits should take place early enough to determine the underlying causes of crises and to prevent any deterioration thereof.

Some speakers called for the Council to involve the Member States directly concerned by matters under consideration in its consultations so that it can take fully informed decisions.

They were also concerned to note that, during the period covered by the report, matters of equal importance were not given equal attention, creating the impression of selectivity on the part of the Council.

There was a broad consensus on the need to strengthen cooperation between the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. In that connection, as President of the General Assembly, I am pleased that many delegations expressed their satisfaction at seeing the Presidents of the Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council holding working meetings, pursuant to resolution 58/316.

Moreover, several speakers called for a strengthening of cooperation between the Council and regional organizations in order to increase the capacities of the latter in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Many speakers underlined the need for the Council to hold a greater number of public meetings in order to allow Member States to express their opinions on matters before it. They called for a greater degree of participation by non-members of the Council in informal plenary consultations, particularly when the Council considers matters of direct concern to them.

Turning to agenda item 53, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", I wish to stress the fact that the debate on this item was taken up in the context of the general debate and of the consideration of the report of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform and of the forthcoming report of the High-level Panel appointed by the Secretary-General to consider United Nations reform.

Speakers took the opportunity to congratulate my predecessor, Mr. Julian Robert Hunte, President of the

General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, and the two co-Chairmen of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council, Ambassadors Luis Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador and Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein, on their excellent work.

Several points emerged from the debate. First, a broad consensus exists on the following four positions. The General Assembly is attached to the idea of Security Council reform, which must be undertaken with determination and alacrity before the sixtieth session, in the light of the work of the High-level Panel, so as to adapt the Council to the realities of the twenty-first century. Reform must address the Council's composition, methods of work and relations with the General Assembly and other bodies. There is a need to expand the Council's composition so as to make it more representative and thereby to strengthen the legitimacy and authority of its decisions. For example, speakers noted that the ratio of representation of Member States on the Council had fallen from 21.56 per cent in 1945 — 51 Members, with 11 Council members — when the Organization was created, to 7.85 per cent — 191 Members, with 15 Council members — today. Some Member States indicated that a future, expanded Council should have 24 or even 25 members. The Council's expansion should enable better representation for developing countries.

Secondly, some speakers spoke in favour of increasing only the number of non-permanent members. A majority of speakers, however, spoke in favour of increasing membership in both categories, permanent and non-permanent.

Thirdly, speakers offered a variety of views on the status, prerogatives and powers of possible new permanent members, in particular as regards the right of veto and the distribution of seats.

With respect to the right of veto, some speakers felt that future permanent members should be fully endowed with that right, like the current permanent members. Others felt that the veto should not be granted because it is anti-democratic, anachronistic and discriminatory and would further complicate the Council's functioning. Others still felt that the veto should be eliminated entirely or have its usage regulated by being limited, for instance, to Chapter VII issues.

With respect to the distribution of potential new permanent seats, some speakers specifically mentioned Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, Brazil, India and an African State as future permanent members. Others stressed that permanent seats should be given not to States, but to regions or groups that would be responsible for designing their own means of designating countries that would be eligible immediately upon the amendment of Article 23 of the Charter.

Furthermore, some speakers felt that the expansion of the Council should take equitable geographic distribution into consideration and reflect the expectations of the countries of Africa, pursuant to the recommendations of the Harare summit, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and Eastern Europe and the Arab Group. Speakers also noted that Council reform should be part of broader United Nations reform.

Bearing in mind the observations and proposals made during the debate, I intend to undertake expanded consultations with all the Member States as soon as possible.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council in document A/59/2?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has thus completed this stage of its consideration of items 11 and 53.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.